Independent Third-Party Review of Athabasca University

Final Report, with Recommendations
to the Chair, the Governors of Athabasca University
and the Minister of Advanced Education
Government of Alberta

May 1, 2017

Submitted by
Ken Coates, PhD

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**Coates Holroyd Consulting
Saskatoon, SK**

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Ms. Vivian Manasc
Chair, the Governors of Athabasca University
1 University Drive
Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3

Dear Ms. Manasc:

I am pleased to submit the report, with recommendations, that arises from my Independent Third-Party Review of Athabasca University. As noted earlier, AU has difficult, but not insurmountable, financial and managerial challenges. The university has significant problems, particularly with regard to information technology, public reputation/status, pedagogical models and program structure. Change is necessary, in my view, but the path forward that I envisage builds on the university's history and original mandate. The AU community of scholars, students, staff members and community stakeholders is passionate about their institution and its role in Alberta society. There is considerable appetite for constructive change. And change there must be. There is great desire within the AU community to get out from under the current weight of uncertainty, public contemplation of AU's future, and the routine and open debate about the institution's finances.

The current focus on sustainability, while understandable from an institutional and budgetary point of view, has deflected attention from a significant element. Given the explosion of global interest in online education, the massive investments in educational technology in the current marketplace and a growing preoccupation with retraining and skills development in the face of *new economy* transitions, AU is in a strong position to dramatically expand and change its programs and services. The institution is constrained by a deep interest in the cause of the current challenges – which I emphasize are real – and is currently focused on repairing a model that, to be frank, seems to be in need of substantial change and enhancement. Done properly, AU could enter a period of sustained growth, healthy budgets and the improvement of Alberta's status as a provider of twenty-first century advanced education.

If the institution moves beyond the issues of the past decade and appreciates the opportunities that lie ahead, it is likely that the necessary reinvention and transformation will be possible. AU's target and available audiences have considerable potential for growth, particularly in terms of open access and specialized programming. The university has opportunities through the economies of scale inherent in its current educational model and exciting prospects for extending these further through the introduction of emerging technologies to increase enrolment and improve its financial position. A more expansive, inventive and open approach could,

in contrast, result in a dramatic expansion of AU's student population, geographic reach, global presence and financial resources.

I have enjoyed my work with the AU community, including the time I spent with Interim Board Chair Marg Mrazek and yourself as the new Board Chair. AU President Dr. Neil Fassina has been open, collaborative and supportive. The Honourable Marlin Schmidt, Minister of Advanced Education for Alberta, has been a strong supporter of this review and clearly hopes that a new path can be found for AU. Indeed, my exchanges with government officials have been collegial and encouraging throughout this process. I have been astonished and pleased by the responsiveness of the students, alumni, faculty and staff of the university. The engagement with this project, including by leaders in the Alberta post-secondary sector, politicians and others, has likewise been consistently strong and rewarding.

I hope that this report contributes to the reimagining of Athabasca University and to the establishment of the institution as a strong, innovative, sustainable and creative force in Albertan and Canadian post-secondary education.

Yours truly,

Ken Coates, PhD

Athabasca offers degree programs to anyone living anywhere in the world. I can connect or not connect with other students as much as I desire and, without distractions commonly found in classrooms, I may commit to very intense study in my own home, while also setting an example for my children about how to love learning, how to study and how to pursue one's academic dreams. My children may witness, not just hear about, what I did at school today.

I am a single mother, hoping and relying on Athabasca's being there for both me and my children, one of whom has taken a course already. Because of Athabasca, I will be able to make a better life for myself and my children. I hope you will take my perspective into consideration when evaluating its viability in Alberta, the rest of the world and the lives of those who value all that the university has to offer.

AU Student

The Independent Third-Party Review of Athabasca University

The Government of Alberta and the Governors of Athabasca University established guidelines and parameters for this Third-Party Review (See Appendix A). A series of core assumptions guided the preparation of this report:

- AU has tens of thousands of students enrolled in its courses, thousands registered in undergraduate and graduate programs, and thousands of proud and accomplished graduates. There is ample evidence of student interest, professional recognition and employer acceptance of AU's offerings. Indeed, it is also clear that there are additional students who could be attracted to the university. By any objective standard, there is substantial student demand in Alberta, across Canada and internationally for AU's programs, courses and services. The current financial challenges make it clear, however, that there are also significant issues about AU's resources, program mix, deployment of personnel, administrative expenses and other managerial issues.

- The Third-Party Review was undertaken because the Government of Alberta and the AU Board of Governors had significant concerns about AU's management system, short-term financial situation, long-term fiscal viability and place within the provincial post-secondary system. The current AU business model is not financially sustainable and will not support the institution in the coming decades. There are institutional challenges related to location, physical infrastructure, contractual arrangements and organizational structure that are incompatible with the university's financial resources. That said, AU has the potential, if significant changes are made to its structure, approach and program mix, to be a viable, sustainable and highly-relevant part of the Alberta post-secondary system.

- The core assumption – that AU has serious financial challenges – is fundamentally correct. The university faces major financial difficulties. AU has an immediate (2017-18) financial problem that must be dealt with in this budget cycle. Failure to do so will result in an accumulation of debt that could imperil the future of the university or, at minimum, delay much needed restructuring. The necessary budgetary allocations must be made in the context of broader changes and restructuring that will result from this review and the institution's response to it. The "Sustainability Report" prepared by a committee under the direction of Interim President Peter Mackinnon in 2015 outlined the financial challenges in detail, although the AU community struggled it is effort to come to terms with the serious implications of that study.

- AU is expected, by the Government of Alberta and other stakeholders, to maintain a presence in the Town of Athabasca, consistent with revised business and academic plans. At present, AU has not fully internalized its

commitment to northern Alberta and the Town of Athabasca, meaning that significant opportunities have been lost or ignored. This said, remaining in the Town of Athabasca carries significant challenges for the institution, including:

» Higher transportation and human resource costs than competing institutions, undermining organizational efficiency

» Difficulty recruiting faculty members and professional and technical staff to the Town of Athabasca and area, a situation complicated by the small recruiting pool in Athabasca and the surrounding region

» Challenges promoting AU provincially, nationally and internationally, given the town's isolated location and small size

» A lack of alignment between AU's current mission and mandate and the opportunities presented by being located in northern Alberta

» The fact that there are few students on campus, resulting in a lack of the vitality that is often experienced in small college towns

- The culture of pedagogical and technological innovation that launched AU into national and international prominence before 2000 has been overtaken by imitation and experimentation at other post-secondary institutions. AU's standing has, in the process, been compromised to a significant degree by the resulting competition. Changes in the Canadian educational and employment landscape have changed enrolment patterns and program and course preferences in ways that do not match AU's program and course structure. The emergence of dozens of credible online university alternatives has undermined AU's competitive advantage. As a result of these changes within the Alberta system, particularly the expansion of online programming, AU no longer has a clear and obvious role within the Province of Alberta's six-sector model.

- AU has perceptibly shifted away from its initial focus on providing open and accessible university-level programming and, while maintaining the principles of open access, has adopted a more comprehensive and professionally-oriented approach without preparing a clear and updated mandate and institutional vision. AU requires a revised, focused and sustainable program mix if it is to remain competitive and relevant within the provincial system and among the country's post-secondary educational institutions.

- A combination of decisions made by AU over the past decades and managerial challenges within the organization resulted in major budgetary issues, mission creep and a loss of focus. These processes, combined with intense competitive pressures in the online learning environment, have exposed weaknesses in AU's decision-making procedures. There is wide consensus that faster, more inclusive and collaborative decision-making is essential. There are aspects of the AU institutional culture that have slowed the pace of change and adaptation within the university. As a consequence, AU's

decision-making structures and cultures require attention and streamlining. The current institutional environment is not well-suited to timely and decisive planning and decision-making at a time of dramatic and sustained change in post-secondary education.

- AU's early and comprehensive investments in online infrastructure left the institution with a legacy of expensive, complicated and difficult-to-maintain information and communication technology (ICT) systems. Given that technology and online delivery systems sit at the centre of AU's delivery, managerial and pedagogical models, it is essential that the university have appropriate and sustained ICT systems in place. At present, there are serious deficiencies in this regard.

AU has, as outlined, a significant set of challenges, offset in large measure by impressive contributions. The problems are quite clear, as the 2015 sustainability report documented, but solutions have proven to be elusive. This report is designed to identify areas for development and refinement that the institution, if properly mobilized and determined, should consider if it hopes to get back on a secure and promising track.

This report does not suggest that the path forward is easy, obvious or assured. These are turbulent times in post-secondary education, particularly in online learning. Registration at American online institutions has been changing dramatically, both increasing and decreasing depending on program mix and marketing activity (See Appendix B). The venerable Purdue University recently acquired Kaplan University, a private, for-profit online institution, in a move that surprised many observers for its blending of business models and approaches to higher education and pedagogy. The combination of new technologies, shifting student preferences, workforce uncertainties and the global proliferation of colleges and universities has created turbulence in an educational system noted for its traditions, solidity and reliability.

I've been a student of AU since 2014, returning to education after a 15-year hiatus. With a full-time demanding career (with plenty of travel) and two kids, AU's unique online delivery method is my only opportunity to finish my undergrad (with a reputable degree) and pursue higher level studies.

AU Student

Background

Founded in 1970, AU is almost 50 years old. In 2016-17, the university had close to 40,000 individual students enrolled in its courses and programs, and over 1,700 students graduate each year. This level of enrolment represents enough full-time-equivalent students to place the institution in the middle rank of Canadian universities in terms of its size. When questions arise about the future and sustainability of AU, it is important to keep these numbers in mind. There is clear, sustained and substantial interest in AU programs and courses.

Academic Credentials Awarded (2014-16)

Program	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Bachelor of Administration	12	15	10
Bachelor of Arts	105	101	85
Bachelor of Commerce	82	73	70
Bachelor of General Studies	100	98	130
Bachelor of Health Administration	8	9	7
Bachelor of Human Res. Labor Rel.	36	58	66
Bachelor of Management	113	109	102
Bachelor of Nursing	188	183	234
Bachelor of Professional Arts	93	96	123
Bachelor of Science	31	26	27
Total Bachelor Degrees	**768**	**768**	**854**
Undergraduate Certificate and Diplomas	119	116	119
Total Undergraduate Credentials	**887**	**884**	**973**
Doctor of Business Administration	4	4	6
Doctor of Education (Distance Education)	3	4	3
Master of Arts	104	92	86
Master of Business Administration	167	177	175
Master of Counselling	71	70	66
Master of Education (Distance Education)	37	56	57
Master of Health Studies	74	61	84
Master of Nursing	148	182	218
Master of Science (Information Systems)	20	23	19
Total Graduate Degrees	**628**	**669**	**714**
Graduate Certificates and Diplomas	208	207	187
Total Graduate Credentials	**836**	**876**	**901**
Total Credentials Awarded	**1,723**	**1,760**	**1,874**

Post-secondary Environment

It is important to put AU's situation in context. The university's problems, while acute, are not particularly unique within the Canadian post-secondary system. Like other institutions, AU wrestles with the consequences of decisions that, in retrospect, were ill-advised. All universities are coping with changing demographics and shifts in program preference. While AU struggles to update its ICT systems, other universities face major problems with deferred maintenance on aging buildings. Cumulatively, however, AU faces a collection of challenges that have put its future under a cloud, creating a level of uncertainty and worry that has, by itself, become a significant part of the institutional environment.

Across Canada, and certainly within Alberta, the advanced education system is undergoing substantial change, with the province's current economic, budgetary and unemployment problems complicating the situation. Among Alberta's 26 post-secondary institutions, there has been dramatic change and ongoing transformation, marked by the emergence of Mount Royal and Grant McEwan as universities, requests by Red Deer College and Grande Prairie Regional College for degree-granting status, enrolment and financial challenges at several of the colleges serving remote and northern areas, and the emergence of culturally and pedagogically important Indigenous institutions. It is enough of a challenge for a single institution such as AU to adjust to broader social, economic and workplace conditions; making substantial changes as part of a system that is showing continuing signs of innovation, excellence, responsiveness and programmatic creativity only adds to that challenge.

I am convinced that there is a path to long-term viability. I believe, further, that the best strategy for future success is strongly connected to AU's founding values and mandate. Reimagined and revitalized, AU will continue to contribute substantially to Alberta's post-secondary system, help the province meet the needs of twenty-first century adult learners and bring its operations in line with its financial resources. Achieving this objective will require careful, intense and rapid decision-making by the AU community and will require the strong and sustained support of the Government of Alberta. Put simply, AU is a real asset for the Province of Alberta. Provided the institution takes significant steps to align its operations with budgetary reality, demographic changes and educational needs, it can continue to make a major contribution to the provincial post-secondary system.

Report Overview

I conclude this section by outlining what I propose to do in the remainder of the report. The Terms of Reference for the Independent Third-Party Review are broad and comprehensive. While this gave me enormous latitude to explore AU's inner and external dynamics, these directions also produced a formidable challenge for a review that was to take only three-and-a-half months. In reviewing the challenges associated with the review, and following the collection of the data and discussing the situation with the Board Chair, the President and senior Government of Alberta officials, I decided that a high-level analysis, focusing on structural difficulties and future possibilities, would be far more beneficial to AU than a detailed analysis of program offerings and budgetary allocations. There is unevenness in AU courses and programs that needs to be addressed. Budgetary commitments are far from ideally aligned

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Athabasca University is valuable because it offers courses in a way that can make the education process easier and more accessible to many people. I genuinely want to see this university continue to exist and to improve as an educational institution.

AU Student

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with the university's mission and mandate. An impending financial crisis is real, not imagined. But an examination that focused on exploring these elements, perhaps to the detriment of the even more pressing questions of structure, internal operations, market competitiveness and revitalized mandate, would not provide a path forward. AU will flourish if the university community can rally around its reaffirmed mission, take control of its future and prepare a strategy to transform the institution. This report challenges AU to do precisely that, providing what I hope is an optimistic vision of what is possible and a realistic and constructive strategy for moving forward with urgency and commitment.

AU has been studied extensively in recent years, through annual institutional reports, special reviews, studies done by faculty members and examinations by government officials. The nature of the institutional deficit and debt, impending financial challenges, unevenness in course and program enrolment, shortcomings in the ICT system, inconsistencies in staffing across the institution, the high cost of maintaining AU facilities and other elements are well-known, even if there is a lack of consensus on some details. Everyone in the institution seems to recognize that competition from other universities and colleges is eroding AU's position in the educational marketplace. Many people, excepting those in high enrolment, high revenue programs, are worried that AU's reinvention will come at the expense of their unit or their career. The problems are known, and attempting a precise description of what are inherently complicated processes and forces would likely lead to extensive internal and external debate. This, in turn, could divert attention from the primary purpose of this independent review, which is to provide AU with something of a roadmap to the future. This report, therefore, focuses on the options available to the AU community.

AU's future rests in the hands of the Board of Governors, the President, the collegial processes within the institution and the faculty, staff and students. It cannot and should not depend on a single external review, although I do hope that this report provides helpful guidance. As a result, I recommend that the Government of Alberta and the Board of Governors agree to an aggressive internal process that calls on the AU community to respond to the suggestions and possibilities outlined in this report. This process is essential, principally to show the Government of Alberta that the university understands the seriousness of the issues at hand, that it can produce an internally-driven action plan that will revitalize AU and that the institution is prepared to make the difficult choices necessary to re-establish itself on a firm financial footing that is based on a robust, forward-looking and Alberta-centric academic plan.

I am convinced that the Board of Governors, the President and the faculty and staff of AU are up to this challenge. The overwhelming majority of the members of the AU community are strongly devoted to the institution, and they very much want it to succeed. An internally-prepared plan that responds to the issues identified and suggestions made in this report will build consensus within the university and reinforce AU's position within the Alberta post-secondary system. It will also announce to the academic world that Athabasca University, with the support of the Government of Alberta, is determined to be an active leader in redefining twenty-first century advanced education in Alberta and Canada.

Context

Founded in 1970, and a pioneer in distance education and online learning, Athabasca University has a distinguished track record for pedagogical innovation and outreach. From the perspective of the Government of Alberta, AU was designed to reach out to non-traditional learners, individuals who by choice or circumstance were unable or unwilling to attend a bricks-and-mortar institution. The government saw special needs and opportunities in rural and remote parts of the province, a perspective that was reinforced through the relocation of the campus administration to the Town of Athabasca, a decision that demonstrated a unique commitment to the economic, social and educational development of northern Alberta.

For more than 45 years, AU has provided excellent services to its students and, through them, to the Province of Alberta and to Canada. AU researchers have made important contributions, most notably in the fields of distributed and online learning. When AU led the national move toward online education, the institution, its faculty, staff, students and alumni deservedly attracted international attention for pedagogical and technological innovation. In a critical development, the institution reached out across the country, developing an educational and financial niche as the provider of courses to students from colleges, polytechnics and universities who needed a single course (and sometimes more) to complete their academic program. AU also developed from its foundation of traditional undergraduate degrees, delivered in the distance education/online format, but in recent decades added more unique degrees, certificates and other credentials at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The teaching, technical, and especially the research project opportunities that AU has given me have broadened my skill set significantly. I have had the opportunity to work with some amazing scholars over the years. Our work has enabled me to became a published academic author, to hone my presentation skills and to expand my exceedingly limited network of academics across the globe without considerable time, financial expense, or inconvenience.

AU Graduate

AU's internal operations have changed dramatically over the years. After its relocation from Edmonton to the Town of Athabasca, the institution initially took its northern location to heart. It built fine facilities and attracted a sizeable core of faculty and professional staff to the community. Over time, and partly in response to the growing importance of urban enrolment and the preferences of professional staff and faculty, the university established three additional campuses, including two in the Capital Region and one in Calgary (the latter now located on the campus of Bow Valley College). Over time, most of the faculty members who had lived in the Town of Athabasca moved out, with AU supporting home-based work and giving faculty, in particular, the freedom to choose their office location. This arrangement, emerging as AU moved aggressively into the online world, matched the university's commitment to virtual operations and allowed the institution to recruit faculty and staff members

who may not have been willing to relocate to the Town of Athabasca or the surrounding region. The four-campus and virtual office alignment created substantial and, in my view, still poorly understood and inadequately costed demands on the AU administration, while lessening the university's commitment to and presence in northern Alberta. Like many aspects of AU's operations – not unfamiliar among universities – the programming and management systems evolved from a base established in the past and adapted slowly and episodically over time. AU did not, it appears, engage in a fundamental re-evaluation of its programs and operations despite substantial changes in its student mix, program offerings and organizational commitments.

The last decade has been difficult to AU. University community members have provided numerous explanations for the challenges and the institution's response, many of them contradictory in nature. I have decided not to attempt a full explanation for the sources of the current difficulties, if only because they are not particularly germane to the future prospects of the university. The Province of Alberta has a new Minister of Advanced Education as of February 2016, and the university has a new President as of November 2016, a substantially reconfigured Board of Governors in 2016, a new Board Chair as of April 2017, and a rapidly changing global post-secondary education environment that renders the discussion of the issues of the 2000s substantially beside the point. Some of the long-standing issues will be addressed in the rest of the review. Suffice it to say that the difficulties of the past 10 years have weighed heavily on AU's faculty, staff, students and alumni, creating what I believe to be a strong consensus about the need for revitalization and renewal, even if there is not yet an agreement on the shape, timing and nature of the required changes.

Consultations

This review is based on an extensive consultation with the members of the Athabasca University community and other stakeholders. The consultations began in January and continued to the end of April 2017. My meetings with all participants have been characterized by professionalism, openness and a sincere interest in the future of AU. I visited all four AU sites and held numerous information sessions with administrators, faculty and staff (with many people participating in these meetings by telephone). I invited all participants to follow-up on our meetings by way of a written submission or a telephone call. I held separate meetings with AU's unions, received over 250 submissions from faculty, staff and administrators, and spoke, individually, by phone to several dozen members.

I reached out to the current AU students and alumni and was astonished by the response. Close to 500 people (the precise number is impossible to ascertain as I did not record the number of people participating on teleconference calls) participated in these discussions. While a few people submitted short comments, many more sent along substantial commentaries about the strengths and weaknesses of the university. Several individuals sent along reports submitted during earlier AU review processes or as personal submissions to senior administration. Collectively, the response from the AU community was remarkable and deeply supportive of the search for a secure future for the institution. The internal conversations have been strongly supportive, albeit with expressions of concern and frustration about current uncertainties and the challenges of the past decade.

Over these last eight years I have talked to a great many people in my working career about Athabasca. You know what I've realized? AU has a PR problem. I'm sure this is not new news. Do you know how many times I've had to explain and defend my choice? Do you know how often I've heard "Well I just don't know how that would look on a resume" or "Will people treat that degree the same as one from a real university?" The second one especially infuriates me. I have spent the last eight years of my life sitting at the kitchen table after a long day at work, forcing myself to study, only to be potentially judged by a colleague or future employer about the validity of my degree.

AU Student

My consultations extended well beyond the university itself. I had a series of telephone conversations with senior officials in the Department of Advanced Education and was impressed with their frank and open discussions about AU's role in the Province of Alberta. I spoke to senior administrators at other Alberta post-secondary institutions, including presidents and academic vice-presidents at the three other Comprehensive Academic and Research Institutions (CARIs) and the presidents and/or academic vice-presidents of all of the colleges in the northern half of the province and several in the central and southern regions. Conversations with leaders of Yellowhead Tribal College

and University nuhelot'ine tthaiyots'i nista meymakanak Blue Quills provided invaluable insights into the potential for collaboration in Indigenous education. I also reached out to specialists in online education and pedagogical innovation, who offered useful perspectives on the evolution of the post-secondary system. I had extended discussions with political representatives from northern Alberta, including the local and provincial representatives of the Town of Athabasca and the surrounding region. I was also approached by several members of the general public who had strong and important insights to offer about AU's role and future. I also reached out to the leadership of several of the professional associations that collaborate with AU. These conversations have been uniformly enlightening. Suffice it to say that people hold strong, often passionate, positions on AU. The external conversations, in contrast to the internal submissions, provided more critical commentary and raised valuable and pointed questions about AU's prospects.

Many hours of meetings and conversations, all of which proceeded in the most collegial and professional manner, provided numerous suggestions about improvements, extended comments on current shortcomings in AU's operations, literally hundreds of individual statements defending the core mission and founding values of the institution, and a great deal of hope for the future.

Athabasca University Feedback

The conversations and submissions from the AU community, external stakeholders and other interested parties provided a great deal of valuable insight. As background for the rest of the review, I thought it would be valuable to summarize some of the strongest and most compelling commentaries that came from the consultations with students, alumni, faculty staff and administrators.

The response from undergraduate and graduate students was extraordinary. The teleconferences attracted substantial interest and the conversations were robust and interesting. Among the many things that students had to say about AU, the following comments stood out:

- Most students responding to the call for submissions were favourably and enthusiastically disposed to AU. They particularly appreciated the open access nature of the institution, the flexible entry system, the wide variety of courses, and the administrative and academic support given to non-traditional learners. Many of those who wrote had studied at a bricks-and-

mortar university or college and had struggled to adapt to the format and schedules of more traditional institutions. When they discovered AU – often through referrals and only rarely through AU advertising and outreach – they indicated that they felt personally liberated and provided with an avenue for academic and career growth.

- I received dozens of testimonials from AU students and alumni who praised the institution for giving them remarkable educational and career opportunities and for giving them opportunities in life that would otherwise not have been available. Their passion for AU is one of the institution's greatest assets – and a profound source of inspiration for those contemplating the future of AU. Many of the students who responded to the call for submissions made it clear that they had exhausted other options for advanced education and career development and that they had discovered personal abilities and employment and entrepreneurial possibilities that they had previously considered unattainable.

- The student feedback was far from uniformly positive. A significant number of students offered detailed complaints about specific aspects of their AU experience. They described problems with faculty and tutors, criticized the content of selected courses and expressed concerns with administrative and registrarial processes. While these contributions provided valuable insights, particularly the sharply divided opinions about Student Support Centre operations and repeated concerns about responsiveness to student inquiries, they were not collectively dissimilar from the student feedback that might be received at any university.

- The students clearly desire more active engagement with one another and efforts toward fostering an improved student experience among AU

community members. A significant number of students had created private and external means of collaborating with fellow students – such as student-run, course-centred Facebook pages – in the absence of a useful AU system for collaboration. The AU undergraduate and graduate student representatives indicated that they have expanded their outreach and engagement efforts but note that the university's systems for communication and active participation leave much to be desired. Alumni echoed the desire for greater engagement with the institution. Many enthusiastic graduates are eager to support other students or the university as a whole and are puzzled that greater effort has not been made to engage with them.

- The uncertainty of the past few years has affected student attitudes toward the university. Many students worried about their ability to complete their studies at AU. Others have delayed starting a graduate or second undergraduate degree or diploma for fear that the university might close before they could complete their studies. Alumni, particularly recent graduates, expressed the concern that the university's much-discussed problems were undermining the reputation of the institution and, directly, the status of their degree. The students and alumni are uniformly eager to have the uncertainty around AU resolved.

- Many writers and speakers urged AU to expand its marketing and fundraising efforts and to make a concerted effort to raise the university's profile. They expressed concern about the limited awareness of AU, which they feel limits the collective appreciation of the institution, affects enrolment and weakens the career impact of AU degrees. They believe that AU could attract many more students if the institution's programs and services were better known. Several dozen students indicated that employers and prospective employers were not aware of AU's programs and questioned the quality of the university's degrees. Importantly, the students endorsed and supported AU and spoke with confidence and conviction about the quality of their university experience.

Administrators, faculty and staff had much to say about AU, its internal operations and the prospects for the future. Several key considerations stand out:

- There is overwhelming faculty and staff support for AU's mandate and general approach, even among those who had pointed criticisms of the institution. Faculty, tutors and professional staff, in particular, have made career-long commitments to online learning and distance education. They hold to heart the commitment to open access and flexible learning and see AU playing a major and innovative role within the Alberta and Canadian post-secondary system.

- There is lack of agreement about the depth and nature of AU's financial challenges. This comes, in part, from the fact that budget debates have been a prominent feature of AU's internal culture for years, without substantial confidence in the administration's portrayal of the institution's financial situation. This belief frustrates senior administrative staff, who are deeply
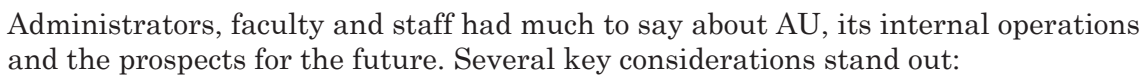
I was becoming more and more aware of the Alberta Government's focus on Alberta students, and I can totally understand why the province would not see it as their responsibility to fund out- of-province students. However, we cannot be so naïve as to think that AU can survive as a stand alone institution only serving Alberta students. Quite the contrary and really, what is the point of being an open online institution if not to serve anyone, anywhere.

AU Staff Member

troubled by the misalignment of commitments and revenue. That the university has financial challenges is evident to me, for a variety of structural, contractual and budgetary reasons, in no small measure because AU does not (with justification) yet have the full confidence of the Government of Alberta such that the government will make the financial investments necessary to put the institution on a more sustainable track.

- Most of the comments from inside the university focused on specific financial matters and questions about administrative structures. There is considerable desire to identify the source of the current financial challenges and, to a surprising degree, to identify the persons or processes responsible for the current malaise within AU. (It is my personal view that this focus on the previous developments is harming the institution and largely ignores the collective and interwoven forces that created the current situation. Indeed, having listened to many passionate and informed commentaries on the past 20 years at AU, I have concluded that the determination to attribute responsibility for the current financial challenges and organizational difficulties is detracting from the institution's focus on future prospects.)

- The dispersed nature of the workforce is a matter of great debate and considerable (if understated) tension. While an institution committed to distance education and online learning should be able to accommodate a distributed workforce, there is considerable unhappiness expressed about the absence of a strong internal culture of collaboration, mentorship and engagement. The connection between the AU staff based in the Town of Athabasca and the rest of the workforce is a matter of significant concern within the institution. AU is, to put it simply, only partially a *virtual institution* and it pays a substantial price for seeking to maintain both a significant physical and an online presence, lacking the capacity to do both properly and incurring substantial costs in the process.

- There was near-universal agreement about the need for major investments in or changes to AU's information and communication technology arrangements. There are many different opinions about what needs to be done, but there is a shared sense of urgency in this regard. Indeed, many people commented that future progress and pedagogical innovation within AU will be difficult without a major transformation of the ICT services at the university. I did not speak to any individuals, including the ICT staff, who thought that the current technological arrangements met AU needs adequately. Even greater concerns were expressed about the preparedness for the future.

[I would like to address] a few of the institutional myths at AU—notably the narrative of uniqueness, coupled with the conviction, despite ample evidence to the contrary, that our courses are just as good (if not better) than those at other universities. . . . I remain in awe of the culture of mediocrity that prevails here. If AU is unique, it is so for its insularity and for its suspicion of intellectual standards.

AU Staff Member

- There appears to be strong agreement that significant changes are required at AU and that the status quo is not sustainable. At the same time, there is no consensus about what those changes could and should be. Staff and faculty offered numerous suggestions about programmatic improvements and structural changes. These were variously expressed as imminent risks to specific institutional functions and jobs or missed opportunities that could address AU's long-term challenges. Like most post-secondary institutions, AU has a strong conservative streak in that support for traditional disciplines runs strong and that faculty members, in particular, have loyalties to their academic unit and program that are perhaps stronger than to the university at large. This said, those individuals who have attempted to introduce substantial programmatic changes express considerable frustration about institutional and financial barriers to effecting a substantial reorientation in AU operations.

- AU's presence in the Town of Athabasca is viewed within the institution with grudging acceptance rather than enthusiasm. It is not viewed as being central to AU's core purpose or successful operation but rather reluctantly accepted as a politically motivated requirement. In general, the university community takes the institution's commitment to the town and region as a given. They do appreciate what the university means to the community and realize that the removal of AU would have dire consequences for the local economy. That said, the relocation of most of the faculty members away from the Town of Athabasca has limited the connections between the community and the institution. Importantly, there is no agreement across the campus about the value of the location to AU. I should also note that the university significantly underestimates the total cost of maintaining the Athabasca location. References to the costs of the distributed operation, including commitments in the Town of Athabasca, typically focus on direct transportation and facility costs and do not incorporate staff and faculty time. The university does not have a full accounting of the costs associated with their chosen administrative and structural arrangements.

AU exists in an era of national and global competition in distance education and online learning. Where AU was once a true and highly praised international leader, it is now seen as a traditional and, in the minds of some observers, an increasingly uncompetitive institution. The university has been caught in the *online squeeze*, where its competitive advantage has been eroded as new online institutions emerge (public, private and for-profit) and where traditional bricks-and-mortar universities and colleges are offering more courses and programs online. The scale of the online transition in Alberta is remarkable, with late entrants able and eager to capitalize on the latest technologies and to address known and substantial student demand. Put simply, other universities, colleges and institutes have encroached on AU's market. It is likely that the university will be influenced by competition even more in the future, particularly through a shift to workplace upgrading and just-in-time training that could challenge existing post-secondary models.

AU must address a significant question: "Where will AU be when everyone is learning online?" The growth of online and mixed media instruction is rapidly changing the university's market opportunities. While AU retains some vital differences from the national and international norm, the uniqueness of online courses and programs is declining. Key leaders assert that the shift to online instruction will accelerate, with more institutions entering the field. AU's uncertainties will continue in the coming years, but ideally the focus will shift from ongoing concern about internal operations to the re-emergence of excitement about the institution's future prospects.

[W]ithout attending Athabasca University as an on-line institution, I would not be able to attend school. I have a husband who works away, two toddlers, and no family nearby to help with childcare. So I do the majority of my homework this time at night, after the kids are in bed. If I had to attend classes during the day in person, I would have to pay expensive childcare costs. Already we have put ourselves into debt paying for part-time childcare so that I have a few daytime hours to do some schoolwork, but the majority of my schoolwork is done late at night. I think the instruction we receive at AU is high quality, I have no complaints at all.

AU Student

It is our service delivery model that is in dire need of improvement. If AU paid half the attention to student service that it does to reactionary fiscal restraints there would be no issue at all as our current students would be more apt to be our continuing students.

AU Staff Member

AU's Primary Value Proposition

If Athabasca University is to flourish – which is a better target than being merely sustainable – the institution and the Government of Alberta have to make clear commitments based on shared understandings. In the rapidly changing post-secondary environment, there is an urgent need for Canadian leadership in the field of educational technology and advanced pedagogy. For AU, this requires a refocusing of its efforts and a renewed commitment to global leadership. For the government, this necessitates cautious reinvestment, primarily in the form of sustained funding to support the transition and the capital needed to build a nation-leading educational technology foundation.

- AU should rebrand itself as the leading Canadian centre for online learning and twenty-first century educational technology. AU has a distinct and potentially insurmountable advantage. The university has the education technology professionals needed to provide leadership, the global reputation needed to attract and hold attention, and the faculty and staff ready to experiment with and test new ideas in an area of emerging national priority. There is a critical challenge, however. AU currently lacks the ICT model and facilities to rise to this opportunity.

- Achieving this status will not be easy. Reinvestment by the Government of Alberta is needed. While the government will not make AU the sole provider of online learning among Alberta universities and colleges, it may encourage AU to lead ed-tech innovation in the K-12 schools, in the college system and in universities that wish to align themselves with AU. Perhaps most promisingly, AU could contribute directly and substantially to professional development and upgrading for the Government of Alberta and Alberta's major employers.

Areas of Focus

It is clear that AU has a potentially important role to play in Alberta, across Canada and globally. This evolving role, I believe, shares much in common with AU's long-standing mandate but is both more focused and better connected to contemporary employment, economic and educational realities. Addressing these responsibilities

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Overall, my Athabasca experience was fantastic. I liked that the assignments challenged the student to apply the theory to real-life work examples. I have always had trouble with programs that reward individuals for their memorization skills where they simply regurgitate what they read. The comprehensive exam and the applied project required the student to demonstrate that he or she understood the concepts by applying them to a case study.

AU Student

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and opportunities will require a significant reorientation of AU's activities, including the gradual closure of some programming, to be determined through an appropriate but time and market-sensitive academic process. These areas of focus assume that AU needs to identify clear and vital student audiences connected to short and long-term educational and economic needs in Alberta.

1. **Open Access:** AU should continue, and even expand, its activities associated with population groups that are under-represented in the Albertan and Canadian post-secondary system. These target groups include women in math and science-based programs, residents of rural and remote regions, home and place-bound students, new Canadians, Indigenous Peoples and students with disabilities. It is important to register a caveat here. These audiences are diffuse; they often bring significant learning and support challenges for institutions; they cannot generally succeed without substantial and responsive institutional support. Accepting or recommitting to these student groups represents a major institutional and Government of Alberta contribution to improving life opportunities for people who enjoy fewer options than other Canadians.

2. **Diversity of the Student Population:** While AU has a unique commitment to open access in Alberta, it should continue to take a broad approach to recruitment. Many students with strong academic standing and many institutional options decide to attend AU for reasons of flexibility, cost and programs. Adding thousands of students from other parts of Canada (whose enrolment does not attract government funding) nonetheless builds economies of scale that support the overall AU enterprise and thus allows the university to provide more and better services for Albertans. Equally, AU should do much more to reach out to international audiences, where the demand for high quality Canadian university programming is quite strong. AU should expand its reach in a carefully managed way, for its delivery system and most of its courses can accommodate large numbers of students in a cost-effective manner. Diversification of the student body is an important means of protecting the institution from downstream fluctuations in enrolment by Alberta students.

3. **Professional Courses, Diplomas, Undergraduate Degrees and Master's Programs:** AU should continue and expand its efforts to educate lifelong learners and should expand its career-focused and advanced educational opportunities. This would involve additional professional degree programs and carefully

developed and market sensitive responses to opportunities in this field. There is every sign that this market will continue to grow, but it will also be increasingly crowded. Institutional focus and marketing will be required to be successful. There are particularly impressive opportunities in business, health and educational technology, but other fields, including service to Indigenous Peoples, are also available for development. To be successful in this latter area, it seems, institutions will have to focus on connecting fields of study to economic change, to short-term areas of interest and engagement, and to different course and program formats. There is also what appears to be a large and largely untapped market for flexible, multi-disciplinary approach to curiosity-based graduate programming. The interdisciplinary Master of Arts (Integrated Studies) is an impressive program that speaks to the substantial and sustained interest in curiosity-based inquiry and stands as a counterbalance to those who would argue that AU should focus exclusively on professional and career-oriented degrees.

4. **Deployment of Faculty:** While faculty members are critical to the success of a university, the standard disciplinary and faculty-centric approach to professional commitment will constrain an innovative, creative online institution. Colleges have a great deal more flexibility in this regard and are able to shift faculty resources to meet potential or emerging needs. AU will have to work with faculty members, faculties and departments, and professional associations and unions to develop strategies that provide appropriate career protection while giving AU the opportunity to be more responsive than in the past in its allocation of human resources.

5. **Mid-Career Retraining:** AU has an open-ended opportunity to focus on mid-career retraining and adaptations to the *new economy*. There is an abundance of evidence that the dislocation of middle-class employment is continuing. Thousands of mid-career professionals have lost their jobs in Alberta alone in recent years. Employment in the emerging tech-driven economy requires both a wider range of skills and specialized training. If AU is to focus on meeting the needs of this vital cohort, it will have to adjust its programs, delivery systems and the engagement of faculty and tutors. AU could become an international leader in just-in-time education and training. Much of this work could emanate from companies seeking specific learning opportunities for their staff in response to changing economic and business conditions.

6. **Pedagogical Innovation:** AU has an opportunity to build on its reputation for pedagogical innovation by focusing on the emergence of greater understanding of learning styles and related transformations in pedagogy, educational technology and online learning. This may include modular, on-demand instruction, increased use of emerging technologies, experimentation in visualization, gamification, and the deliverable development of commercializable intellectual property, potentially under a creator-owned approach to research and development that could transform remunerations for AU faculty and professional staff members.

AU's Presence in Athabasca

Athabasca University does not have a full accounting of the cost of operating with a substantial presence in the Town of Athabasca. The university has, for some 30 years, simply accepted the Athabasca facility and staffing plan as an unalterable feature of institutional operations. Even a most basic appraisal of the real costs to AU of being in the Town of Athabasca, suggests that they are considerable, with the human resource expenses exceeding the direct transportation costs by a substantial margin.

The Government of Alberta has indicated that it expects AU to maintain an active and, by implication, substantial presence in Athabasca. If AU were to be withdrawn from Athabasca, the impact on the community would be severe. In response to this vital question, I recommend the following:

- That AU, while focusing on the other priorities outlined above, develop a more focused presence in the Town of Athabasca, with the emphasis of this work being on the Government of Alberta's determination to assist the northern, rural and Indigenous students in the region.

- That AU relocate selected core AU activities to AU offices in the Edmonton region.

- That the Athabasca-based effort lead the university's outreach efforts to open access and students in Athabasca, with a primary focus on registrarial, student support and specialized services.

- That AU should collaborate with regional stakeholders to consider new partnerships with northern colleges, northern communities and Indigenous communities to address regional educational needs. There appears to be considerable, but not uniform, support for such an initiative among northern institutions. This could include the consideration of face-to-face delivery (perhaps for short-term, cohort-based activities) for northern degree-completion students in Athabasca.

- That a substantial effort could be made to collaborate with regional high schools, and especially the new 1000-student high school under construction next to the AU campus, to offer students an opportunity combine high school and university online attendance in order to enhance educational offerings, particularly for smaller high schools. By developing the expertise and experience in the North, AU may be able to roll out this activity province-wide and help rural Albertans find on-going opportunities in their home communities. The Government of Canada announced additional funding in May 2017 for dual-credit initiatives between high schools and post-secondary institutions, indicating support for this general concept.

- If AU is committed to a substantial research and intellectual leadership presence in northern Alberta, it stands to reason that this effort should be centred at Athabasca. The goal should be, in a manner consistent with that developed by Yukon College and the University of Alaska system, to promote regionally-relevant research, to collaborate with northern businesses and governments, to build research capacity in the North, and to assume a leadership position in the promotion of scholarly and applied work on the provincial North in Canada.

While the town wants the university to stay there, I'm not sure how much time and effort it puts into supporting the university. I for one, was someone who moved from Ontario to Athabasca to assume a position with our faculty. At no time did the town offer any assistance with housing, introduce me to services, etc. While I am capable of doing this on my own, I was surprised at the lack of support from the community.

AU Staff Member

As you are aware our students often face a number of barriers such as ESL, new to Canada, less than stellar GOPAs out of high school, single parents, chronic illness and so on. . . . [O]ur students are exceptional and offer a commitment to serve Canadians that is awe inspiring and unique. . . . There is no shortage of places where bright, wealthy, and well-supported youth can advance their education. There are, however, an increasingly small set of venues that can assist in the advancement of this unique group of students.

AU Staff Member

Overall, the culture of the institution needs to shift. We tend to work harder not smarter and its affects the bottom line. We need to make some smart business decisions to be sustainable in the future.

AU Staff Member

I'd also beg to question why our government continues to fund every institution in this province to offer online learning delivery within the confines of traditional infrastructure, brick-and-mortar buildings and overhead tied to them?

AU Staff Member

The Role of the Government of Alberta

While Athabasca University must make a series of crucial decisions about finances, facilities, instructional design, curriculum, marketing and the like, it is vital to understand the Government of Alberta's central role in the future of AU. I would summarize some of the questions concerning government policies and investments as follows:

- There are people within the AU community who believe that the government should identify AU as *the* provincial online learning centre and, further, should hold back all funds sent to other universities for online course development and delivery. Given the state of online engagement and multi-year investment in the community colleges, teaching intensive universities and research universities, this is clearly not going to happen. This would mean, logically, that the activities and programming of other universities and colleges will continue to contribute to the competitive environment facing AU. With the realization that the Government of Alberta will continue to support online education at other Alberta institution, it is vital that the government work with AU to identify a clear and long-term niche within Alberta's extensive post-secondary system. As AU completes its mandate and vision review, the university must maintain active contact with the Government of Alberta to ensure that the institution's plan meshes with government priorities.

- From the comments received from stakeholders, it is clear that the Alberta post-secondary educational system faces numerous threats and stresses. On top of the inevitable requests for more money, there are significant concerns about institutional overlap between AU and other online delivery alternatives, the crowded college and polytechnic market, the implications of the requests for degree-granting status by two additional colleges, the potential further expansion of the teaching universities into AU's degree granting space, and the fit between Alberta's post-secondary institutions, student demand and workforce needs. Most of these pressures are not related to AU's current or future role, but rather to uncertainty about long-term funding, flexibility on tuition fees, the perceived need for programming that responds to workplace demands, the system-wide implications of online learning, global competition (including for international students) and concerns about provincial funding models. The systematic debates and issues make it difficult to chart a clear path forward for AU, particularly if other universities and colleges are allowed to enter any new space that AU might pioneer in the years ahead. The Government of Alberta should discuss with AU the possibility of reserving selected pedagogical space for AU in the future, where and when AU creates new market opportunities.

- A plan for AU's future requires clarity on the provincial funding formula. This is unlikely in the short term (2017-18) as the Government of Alberta has launched a system-wide review of funding arrangements. A decision on

AU's funding arrangements will likely emerge from that process. At present, however, the AU funding arrangement is, in many respects, inadequate for the university's mix of programs and students, including its location in the Town of Athabasca and its commitment to students with unique educational and support needs. The Government of Alberta will need be asked to address aspects of the funding relationship with AU in the short-term while the broader evaluation continues.

- As AU restates and implements its commitment to open access and to post-secondary outreach to under-served students, it will have to request and make the case for appropriate funding. The government currently expects AU to reach out to these student groups as a matter of priority but does not provide an appropriate level of incremental financial support. The university needs to make a detailed and compelling case about the incremental recruiting, instructional and student support costs associated with students who enter AU only because of its commitment to open access. Serving these students cannot be understood in standard enrolment terms. Recruiting, supporting and educating students who would otherwise not attend university is a vital but expensive proposition. Most of the students thus educated end up with opportunities that, only a few years earlier, would have seemed unattainable. There is a substantial net benefit to the individual and society from developing these long-excluded students, but AU requires the format, processes and resources necessary to assist these individuals in a professional and systematic manner. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that, for years, Alberta has had a low high-school graduation ranking, reflecting the long-standing availability of high paying jobs in the resource sector for people with less than a high-school education. As a consequence, the province is home to a large number of adults who have the ability to succeed at university but who lack the basic entry-level high-school credentials. AU is extremely well placed to help these people adjust to the current decline in the resource economy and the need for educational upgrading.

- AU faces a similar challenge related to the costs of continuing to operate in the Town of Athabasca. The decision to move AU from Edmonton to the Town of Athabasca was designed to boost social and economic development in northern Alberta. It is entirely appropriate for the Government of Alberta to decide that a post-secondary institution should be located in a small town in a northern setting. Governments across Canada have made similar judgments. In other jurisdictions, these decisions have been associated with additional funds to cover related costs. I am convinced that there are valuable and viable roles for AU in the Town of Athabasca and, indeed, there are options that could produce incremental activity in the coming years. Funding these activities out of government grants and tuition fees, however, requires substantial cross-subsidization from the rest of the institution's operations. The Government of Alberta should be asked for funding to cover some specialized and incremental activities centred in the Town of Athabasca.

Athabasca University's Action Plan

Athabasca University must outline a clear focus for its academic operations. This revised mandate should build on AU's historic strengths and demonstrate a response to changing post-secondary education realities and the nature of a highly competitive post-secondary marketplace. The focus must be matched with a solid business plan that provides a clear path to long-term financial sustainability. AU's plan for a revised operation could address the following elements:

- AU must restate its commitment to being an open access institution and to serving students who would otherwise not be able to pursue a post-secondary education. There is significant unmet potential in this area, but AU has to be much more proactive in seeking students who might benefit from its programs and services.

- AU must, together with Indigenous-controlled institutions, dedicate itself to working collaboratively with Indigenous communities, schools and colleges to address the unmet learning and professional development needs of First Nations and Métis people in Alberta. (This opportunity is discussed further below.)

- AU must make a commitment to collaborate with select colleges in northern Alberta to produce a multi-institutional integrated approach to post-secondary education in the region. Several of the northern colleges have indicated that they are open to such collaborations.

- The university should expand its focus on continuing education, modularized programs, professional development courses and programs, and professional master's degrees, connecting more (but not all) of its academic operations to career-ready programming.

- This university should build its commitment to just-in-time course and program delivery, focusing on the urgent needs of workers and unemployed individuals tied to emerging workforce needs.

- AU must maintain its commitment to serving students enrolled in other universities looking to complete one or two courses, with the recognition that steadily expanding competition and improving institutional transfer agreements may erode this market in the coming years.

- At present, AU gets 35 per cent of its students from the Province of Ontario. The future of this market is uncertain. Ontario is making an aggressive push into online education (including both increased course development and full online degree programs from institutions like McMaster University and Queen's University). The Government of Ontario has made clear that it

intends to move even more substantially into the online space in the coming years. AU will likely see enrolment from Ontario decline unless it expands marketing and outreach efforts.

- There is an emerging view that AU's decision not to require faculty attendance in Athabasca and to even remove the weekly meeting day has had a significant impact on institutional culture. While AU, like any university, cannot compel residence in any specific location, it can and should expect faculty and staff to regularly attend university functions as a core element of their employment relationship with the university. This participation can, in keeping with the spirit and mandate of AU's virtual environment, be by way of video-conferences, live-streaming and teleconferencing. Imposing an immediate shift to this approach could create unhappiness, so the re-establishment of extensive in-person engagement with AU should be handled carefully and with a view to a substantial change in institutional culture over a period of several years.

- The former point is one way of saying that at AU, as at any post-secondary organization, institutional culture and responsiveness will be key elements in determining the long-term viability of the university. Faculty and staff have, in very large numbers, expressed considerable openness to change in order to ensure the long-term success of AU. It is critical that these statements of flexibility and commitment translate into engagement and problem solving as the university responds to the reorganization and program changes that are necessary to succeed.

Take Action on the 2017-18 AU Budget

AU's administration should take immediate steps to bring its expenditures in line with the resources available to the institution and its long-term commitments. These changes, to be incorporated into the AU 2017-18 budget, should be consistent with the recommendations in this review. They should incorporate both expenditure reductions that are consistent with the review and tuition and fee increases, particularly those that bring AU more in line with general Alberta practice. Increasing revenue through the development of more continuing education, professional development and lifelong learning offerings should be a priority.

Clarify the Meaning of and Commitment to AU's Roles as an Open University

AU must work with faculty, staff and the Board of Governors to redefine the meaning of an Open University – with a comprehensive and shared understanding of the attending opportunities and implications. This process should be institution-wide and, while co-ordinated by the Office of the President, should involve all university units in the examination of current practices and outcomes. This should result in the development of an AU profile that aligns with the university's commitment to be truly open and accessible. This review should be concluded by September 1, 2017.

Re-engage the Academy

To launch its internal review processes, AU should, as soon as practical, organize a meeting in which the entire university community participates (live or via video-conference) in a symposium at which leading scholars of online education are asked to address, individually, a single question: "What is the future of online and distance-delivered education?"

Review Programs

AU must produce, by November 1, 2017, a review of existing programs and courses to include the following:

- Evaluation of current offerings to determine which courses and programs cannot be sustained based on past and anticipated future enrolment and the cost of producing course materials and delivering the classes.

- Identification of current offerings that could, with appropriate marketing effort, produce substantially larger and more cost-effective offerings, and definition of the financial contribution required to support the expansion.

- Identification of opportunities for programmatic innovation, particularly in the areas of retraining, professional development, short-courses, and just-in-time course and module delivery.

- Assessment of all existing courses to identify their compatibility with established AU standards for the quality, delivery, academic support and other elements of online courses. The university should establish a priority list for course revision and new program development and should use this evaluation as the starting point for an ongoing quality assurance process for courses and programs.

- Start immediately the process of identifying new continuing education and professional courses and programs. Based on this work, AU should establish, by July 1, 2017, a development unit charged with producing an academic and delivery plan for mid-career retraining, professional development and short-course delivery connected to the needs of employers and mid-career workers, with a view to opening operations in summer 2018. This effort should include wide consultation with Alberta-based companies and professional associations, various levels of government, agencies that support new Canadians (particularly those looking for locally-relevant credentials) and non-profit organizations.

Align Professional and Union Agreements with the New AU Institutional Plan

Union and association contracts can limit institutional flexibility and responsiveness. AU's contracts reflect institutional priorities and values from the past and are not

necessarily well-suited to present and future needs. This situation is not unique to AU or Canadian universities in general. AU should, in a manner consistent with appropriate professional and union bargaining processes, work, over the current negotiation cycle, with its unions and associations to connect its agreements with the revised business plan.

Re-assert Leadership in Educational Innovation

AU should work with existing academic and technological units to create a university centre for educational innovation that will become a national and world leader in educational development, the testing and application of emerging educational technologies, research and publication in the field, and instruction in twenty-first century pedagogy and technology use. This initiative would both respect the historical mission and contributions of AU and reaffirm the institution's commitment to high profile leadership in an area of critical national and international importance.

Create a New Model for Educational Engagement with Indigenous Communities

Working with Blue Quills University, Yellowhead Tribal College, other Indigenous educational institutions, and First Nations and Métis educational authorities, AU should commit itself to a reimagining of post-secondary education for Indigenous students and communities. To ensure appropriate Indigenous control and cultural content, AU should put itself at the service of Indigenous organizations and should position itself as a co-ordinating agency and, where appropriate, provide pedagogical and technical assistance and degree-granting authority for Indigenous programming. As the centrepiece of its commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, communities and governments, AU should commit itself to developing Indigenous-centred and controlled educational opportunities that are designed to serve Indigenous needs. My conversations with leaders at Indigenous-controlled institutions make it clear that they are favourably disposed to co-operating with an Alberta institution that is willing to co-develop an Indigenous-centric curriculum.

Re-engage with Collaborating Northern Alberta Institutions

AU must seek, by December 1, 2017, a basic collaboration agreement with the colleges of Northern Alberta (Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, Portage College, Northern Lakes College) that outlines a co-ordinated plan for post-secondary delivery in Northern Alberta, centred on AU's facilities in the Town of Athabasca. The participation of the potential partner institutions is, of course, to be determined by the colleges and endorsed by the Government of Alberta. The goal of this initiative would be to develop a co-ordinated approach to the provision of college and university degree programming designed to meet the needs of northern students and communities.

Re-engage with the Town of Athabasca and Northern Alberta

By May 1, 2018, AU should have ready to implement, with details of the associated costs, a plan for repurposing and enhancing the presence of AU in the Town of

Athabasca. The primary purpose of this effort would be better address northern educational needs, capitalize on underdeveloped opportunities and position AU as a leading presence in teaching and research related to northern Alberta. As an outcome of this activity, AU should be able to maintain if not expand the size of its operations in the Town of Athabasca and in northern Alberta generally. The specific elements of the AU operation in Athabasca could include the following:

- AU should play a central role in the creation of a northern Alberta centre for advanced education, training and professional development. This work should be undertaken in full partnership with participating northern Alberta colleges and focused on responding to the post-secondary needs of First Nations, Métis and non-Indigenous peoples in northern Alberta. The focus will be on collaborative work with and possible co-location with northern colleges, Indigenous institutions, agencies and communities; on the use of AU facilities, courses, faculty and staff whenever possible; and on brokering in other programs as appropriate. This should include creating a relationship with the new high school opening on AU lands in Athabasca, as well as with other high schools in the region, to enable students to take university courses while still in high school. This collaboration, which would could include face-to-face course delivery at the Athabasca site, could expand AU's presence in the community significantly.

- AU should, in recognition of its renewed commitment to open access recruitment, support and course delivery, and drawing on existing staff resources, create a unit devoted to open access, student recruitment and support services for students in need of academic and student support, as well as first-year courses for students entering the university without the standard admission records. This group will also work, beginning with northern Alberta and expanding from that base, with regional high schools to offer dual-credit courses to increase educational opportunities in the region, an initiative recently supported by the Government of Alberta. This operation could add significantly to the size of the AU workforce in Athabasca.

- AU should maintain, in the Town of Athabasca, the core services provided to the AU community, including registrarial and related student services functions. Keeping these student-oriented operations in Athabasca will ensure a large and sustainable presence in the community.

- AU should create a Northern Alberta Research Unit, based in the Town of Athabasca. This research group would focus on the environmental, social, economic, cultural and political realities of northern Alberta. It would provide research services to national and international researchers interested in the region. If the unit capitalized on the full potential of this operation, by hosting seminars and conferences, supporting researchers and graduate students from other institutions around the world, and generating grant and other research funding to support the operations, the research activities could significantly expand AU's staffing, expenditures and involvement in northern Alberta.

Align AU Facilities with the Academic Mission

AU should, by May 1, 2018, have ready to implement a fully-costed plan that would identify the university's facility needs outside the Town of Athabasca. This plan should be driven by the needs and activities of the revised AU academic and administrative strategy rather than by existing physical locations. The facilities strategy should emerge from the academic plan and subsequent administrative organization. It is likely that the strategy will result in the consolidation of activities outside the Town of Athabasca, the relocation of the Office of the President to the Edmonton region and the development of a detailed plan for the operation of virtual administrative and academic systems.

Redevelop ICT Infrastructure

AU has severe and well-known ICT requirements. Furthermore, any forward-looking strategy will require flexible and up-to-date technological facilities and services. By January 1, 2018, AU should develop a plan for the redevelopment of its information and communication technology infrastructure and services, so that the institution capitalizes on available flexible and cloud-based services and positions itself to be responsive to future developments in the field. This revised system will require substantial investment by the Government of Alberta. The redevelopment of the ICT system should be driven by academic and administrative imperatives and not by technologies or technological processes.

Redefine Service Delivery and the "Customer Experience"

AU needs to re-examine its current balance between faculty and program-based innovation and centralized student services and produce, by February 1, 2018, a plan to define the institutional plan for student services. The current system is complex and confusing to students. The university has many conflicting approaches on many academic and administrative services. Rapid centralization will reduce the culture of successful innovation that currently exists; however, continued decentralization complicates arrangements for students, staff and faculty members. AU should produce a plan that articulates and ongoing approach to redevelopment of service delivery and presents a strategy for the implementation of that approach. This should not be seen as a choice between past and current approaches, but rather should produce a renewed commitment to capitalizing on emerging technologies, psychological understanding and pedagogical innovation to match AU's staff and technological models with student learning and support needs.

Connect Research Activities with the Institutional Mandate and Mission

AU currently has CARI (Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution) status, although the university lacks the resources and track record to be viewed by colleague institutions as a full CARI university within the Alberta system. AU's status as a

CARI is taken far more seriously within the institution than it is across the system, a reality that rests uneasily among AU faculty members. CARI status imposes significant limitations on AU, particularly in terms of faculty time commitment and priorities, with less immediately obvious institutional benefits. Because of the importance of faculty research engagement in the offering of graduate programs and program accreditation, it is important to maintain a selective research presence, although this should be more effectively connected to the university's institutional priorities in order to build the national and international profile of the institution. AU should, by February 1, 2018, produce a review of its research operations and develop a research strategy that should address the following elements:

- A primary focus for AU research activities that matches the institution's commitment to innovation in K-12 and advanced education and online course and program delivery

- A potential second area of focus on the social, economic, cultural and other effects on technological change, with an emphasis on the evolving world of work

- A third area of focus on northern Alberta, in keeping with the university's location in the Town of Athabasca and its continuing commitment to the region

- Other areas of focus, in addition to or instead of the ones outlined above and as identified by AU faculty and senior leadership, that align with institutional priorities and commitments

Some faculty members will continue to pursue their personal research agendas. This work must be respected and recognized through merit, tenure and promotion efforts. Institutional resources should, to the degree appropriate, however, be used to support institutional priorities and thereby promote and enhance AU's thematic specializations.

Commit as an Institution to AU's Transformation

Universities are, by nature and tradition, slow and deliberative institutions. They consider their plans carefully and debate new ideas extensively. They lack the faster decision-making capabilities of colleges and polytechnics. In the current AU environment, the administration and faculty are going to have to balance the need for rapid and thoughtful change with the potential delays associated with standard collegial processes.

The 2017-18 academic year will be crucial for AU. The institution must move quickly to provide the Government of Alberta with a well thought out plan for renewal. It is important, therefore, that the senior administration sit down with the academic

leadership (deans and directors), key personnel on the General Faculties Council, and the Board of Governors to establish a plan that ensures appropriate academic oversight of the accelerated planning and strategizing process. The point here is critical. It is unlikely that the Government of Alberta will accept further delays in the renewal process. AU is truly working to a tight timeline with a great deal at stake. The university has to ensure that its deliberative systems respect the roles of the Board of Governors and the General Faculties Council and that the administration operates in a collaborative and open manner while addressing the urgent need for renewal.

Demonstrate the Government of Alberta's Commitment to AU's Future

In order to provide a clear public statement about their shared commitment to AU, the Government of Alberta and the Governors of Athabasca University should together announce, after the receipt of the final report, the following:

- It is important that the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and the AU Board of Governors agree that, within the framework outlined in this report, there is a viable path forward for AU.

- Similarly, Advanced Education and the Board should declare that they are committed to a renewal and relaunch of AU, based on institutional adaptations to the current and future needs of Albertans.

- In order to reassure existing students, AU should, with the concurrence of the Government of Alberta, commit to ensuring that students currently in the middle of degree programs will be able to complete their programs through AU or, should changes be required in specific AU programs, at another Alberta degree-granting institution.

- The Government of Alberta should give AU one year to complete a revised institutional plan for renewal, potentially with the elements and according to the schedule outlined in this report. The government should, on the basis of its review and acceptance of the AU strategy, commit itself to an additional two years of funding to allow the university to implement the new strategy or, if a plan acceptable to the government is not forthcoming, to wind down operations.

- In recognition of the additional costs associated with a review and restructuring of the institution's mandate, program plans and organizational structures, the Government of Alberta should be asked to provide AU with an additional sum of money to cover the incremental expenses associated with the accelerated and complex planning processes required to complete the rethinking of university operations.

- AU and the Ministry of Advanced Education will have to work over the next budget cycle to get the funding needed for AU's refocusing effort, particularly an appropriate funding model and the significant capital investment in the educational technology required to position AU for long-term growth and real sustainability.

- Given the government's determination that AU should maintain a physical presence in the Town of Athabasca, it is important that additional costs and the limitations on AU's flexibility associated with this requirement be recognized. The government should specifically recognize (i.e., in the funding formula) the incremental expenses associated with implementing the targeted Town of Athabasca commitments outlined above.

Development and Implementation of Athabasca University's Renewal Plan

Based on the priorities outlined above, and as selected and interpreted by the Athabasca University Board of Governors, the academic and collegial processes within the institution and the Government of Alberta, AU must commit itself to a rapid and substantial institutional planning process. In return for the Government of Alberta's assurances about the three-year budget, AU will undertake to:

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by July 1, 2017, a 2017-18 budget that acknowledges the existing financial challenges facing AU and that makes decisions in light of the Board's response to the Third-Party Review.

- Establish, by July 1, 2017, an internal structure that will be responsible for identifying programmatic opportunities for AU that respond to changes in the workforce, the educational marketplace and developments in the field of educational technology.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by September 1, 2017, a review of AU's strategies for operating and expanding its presence in Alberta as an open access institution.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by September 15, 2017, a revised mandate and vision statement that forms the foundation for AU's new business plan.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by October 30, 2017, a communication and branding strategy that is designed to raise the profile and understanding of AU within Alberta and across Canada, focusing on prospective students, parents and employers.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors and the Boards of Governors of collaborating institutions, by December 1, 2018, a preliminary plan, complete with MOUs with participating institutions, for an academic partnership between AU and northern colleges.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by December 15, 2017, a revised staffing, administrative and financial plan that will define the relaunch and reimagining of AU.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by January 1, 2017, an institutional ICT strategy that should identify the needs, opportunities and emerging technologies that can transform AU's academic and administration operations, with an emphasis on remaining flexible while capitalizing on rapid changes in educational technologies.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by February 1, 2018, a strategy for student support service delivery for the institution.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by February 1, 2018, a research strategy for AU that aligns institutional research plans with university priorities.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors and General Faculties Council, by March 1, 2018, MOUs with willing Indigenous partners who wish to collaborate with AU on the development of an Indigenous-centric post-secondary educational partnership.

- Begin to implement, by April 1, 2018, the AU comprehensive strategy for revitalization and growth.

- Produce for approval by the Board of Governors, by May 1, 2018, a fully-costed plan for an enhanced and focused presence in the Town of Athabasca.

One of the major reasons for applying to AU was that a lot of research I read about the fields of distance, online, mobile, and open education came from AU in one way or another. Be it through their open access academic press, their open access journals, the work of their faculty, or their alumni, AU seems at the forefront of this field. I wanted to be part of this and learn from the people there.

AU Student

I always recommend Athabasca learning to individuals I am talking to when they are having the whole "I want to further my education but don't have time" scenario. I am very appreciative of Athabasca's services, and fortunate that I can further my learning on my own time, in my own learning environment that works best for me, and not limited to the typical classroom or webinar setting.

AU Student

Concluding Thoughts

I hope that the above report captures the sense of urgency, commitment and optimism that I developed regarding Athabasca University through the review process. I have long admired AU's instructional and research contributions. Like many in the Canadian post-secondary system, I have been nervous about the stories, rumours and debates surrounding the university over the past decade. No one likes to see a valued and important member of the Canadian family of universities struggling with serious financial and organizational challenges. As I proceeded through the review, I came to understand the history of the campus, the current financial situation, the passion of faculty, staff and students about AU, and the exciting ideas that could fuel and sustain an institutional revitalization.

I must end, however, with a statement about the urgency of the tasks that now face AU. The university is in financial difficulty. Unless significant changes are made – and soon – AU will face a financial crisis early in 2018. The Government of Alberta clearly supports AU's core mission and will, hopefully, be prepared to make incremental investments when it is confident about the institution's long-term plans. Responding to the current financial situation with the standard round of budgets cuts and layoffs would exacerbate the problems, weaken programs, and undermine recruiting efforts (although, importantly, some cuts and reallocations of staff and resources will be required until enrolment and revenues allow for the anticipated renewal and future expansion). A dangerous and potentially unstoppable spiral awaits AU if major steps are not taken this fiscal year. If AU takes major steps backwards in terms of programs and services, it will be hard to slow and stop the decline.

There are many reasons for optimism. Pathways exists that could and should lead AU to financial sustainability in the coming years. Making the necessary changes in emphasis, programming and internal operations will not be easy and will come with dislocations and difficult transitions. This report lays out an aggressive plan that will require intense institutional engagement while the university continues its normal operations. Attending to the recommended deadlines and tasks as outlined above will require extraordinary commitment and institution-wide buy-in. I am convinced that the Board of Governors, President, senior administrative leadership, faculty, staff, alumni and students are up to the challenge. If they respond with determination and commitment to the challenges outlined in this report, I anticipate, being aware of the constraints of the provincial budget, that the Government of Alberta will provide the required support, signals and direction.

As the AU administration contemplates the aggressive and comprehensive planning process laid out it here, it is vital that it find confidence in the expertise and commitment of the Board of Governors, faculty and staff. There is a great deal of talent, an impressive institutional legacy, many pent-up ideas and what appears to be a genuine university-wide desire to change for the better. This said, the processes outlined herein must make room for appropriate academic oversight without falling

victim to excessive consultation. AU has examined its internal forms and processes over the past decade. Consultation must be timely, quick and focused in order to allow for a new strategy to emerge that will point the university forward.

It is important that the AU community understand both the seriousness of the current challenges and the availability of pathways to sustainability. It is equally important the community understand that government investments and policy changes and public support will come only when AU makes clear that it is ready for carefully developed and community-engaged reinvention. The founding mission and mandate of AU is as relevant and important in 2017 as it was in 1970. It remains for the AU community to show that it is able and willing to respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century and to the remarkable opportunities that exist in the rapidly changing world of online education.

I graduated from AU ... after almost fifteen years of studying. Although that may see like a long time (and indeed it was) to take a mere 20 courses, the ability to take those courses while working full time, raising a family, engaging in many extracurricular creative and social activities and living a full active life was only possible with an institution like AU. It allowed me the flexibility to learn on my own time, and to take the time I needed to complete my degree.

AU Graduate

I can honestly say if it wasn't for this institution I wouldn't have been able to do it. I loved the structure and enjoyed that I was still able to hold a full time job while finishing school.

AU Graduate

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY REVIEW

Purpose

To outline the activities to be conducted by an independent third-party for the Board of Governors, which will lead to the development of a sustainability plan for the institution that will focus on ensuring the long term viability of the institution within the community and Campus Alberta.

Background

The Minister has provided to the institution a set of principles to guide the deliberations and inform the development of the sustainability plan. The Minister has directed the institution to hire an independent third-party to develop, in collaboration with the President, an implementable sustainability plan for approval by the Board of Governors.

The sustainability plan should:

- Be developed in collaboration with an independent third-party.

- Be based on the attached principles.

- Examine and assess possible options to improve the sustainability of the institution, including but not limited to:

  » The institution's place within Campus Alberta – this involves exploring the appropriateness of the institution continuing its current capacity, and if the institution's sustainability would improve if it became primarily a teaching university with a greater focus on ensuring access for Albertans;

  » Developing a new business model – this involves examining the appropriateness of the current delivery model as an open and distance university, and exploring alternative delivery methods that would improve sustainability;

  » Partnering with another Campus Alberta Institution – this involves exploring the feasibility and implications of partnering with another institution, including examining the costs, impact on staffing and implications to students of such a partnership; and,

  » Amalgamating with another entity or Campus Alberta institution – this involves exploring the feasibility and implications of the institution becoming a part of another entity, while maintaining the campus in Athabasca.

    * Note that the four options listed above are not exclusive and no potential option has been predetermined as the final outcome by government. The University is encouraged to explore any new ideas as feasible options, which are aligned with the principles, during the course of their consultation and review.

- Outline the financial and academic impacts of each potential option, identify the impact on the community, and indicate the viability of each option and its impact on the sustainability of the institution,

- Be developed in consultation with stakeholders, including the community, faculty and staff, and students; and,

- Provide sufficient analysis and information to support the recommendations made in the report.

Objectives

- To ensure the long-term sustainability of the institution within the community and Campus Alberta.

- Clearly articulate the value proposition that the institution provides to students and to Campus Alberta.

Actions to be undertaken during the review

- Reviewing the history of Athabasca University and such other documents and records of the institution as are deemed material to assessing its current sustainability, and delivery model including: attached principles; the Future of Alberta Digital Learning Forum Summary Report (2015); the Report of the President's Task Force on Sustainability; and the business process and educational reviews.

- Consulting with stakeholders, including: the Ministry; municipal leadership of Athabasca and other municipalities in which the university has a present or past physical presence (St. Albert, Edmonton and Calgary); Athabasca University's senior administration; governing bodies; student and employee associations or unions; and others as deemed appropriate.

- Consulting as necessary with Campus Alberta and experts in open and online learning so as to understand and articulate Athabasca University's value proposition and its capacity to execute its mission in sustainable ways and support the development and assessment of what changes may be required to its business/delivery model to ensure sustainability.

Athabasca University will provide access to all necessary information and make staff, management and the Board of Governors available to the independent third-party.

Deliverables

- A signed contract with a third-party by January 15, 2017.

- A stakeholder engagement plan to be provided to the Board of Governors and Advanced Education 15 days after the third-party has been retained.

- Monthly progress reports to the Board of Governors and Advanced Education starting on February 15, 2017.

- Tentative findings and recommendations will be presented to the Ministry and Board of Governors by April 1, 2017, with a final report incorporating responses to the tentative report by April 30, 2017.

Guiding principles for a sustainable Athabasca University

As directed by the Minister of Advanced Education, the following principles must be considered while the board and president address the long-term sustainability of the institution.

1. Commitment to the community – Include sustainability options that keep Athabasca University in Athabasca. This should consider Athabasca University's unique program delivery model that attracts students, including those in rural and remote communities.

2. Improving accountability – Improving board governance and accountability through a number of means, including reporting and communicating with government in ways that demonstrate openness and transparency.

3. Responsible use of taxpayer and student dollars – Sustainability should be achieved through the responsible and prudent use of financial resources currently available to the institution. Program and course delivery should satisfy a demonstrated need and demand within the Campus Alberta System.

4. Student-focused accessibility – Sustainability options must reflect government's goal of providing accessible, high-quality post-secondary education.

The next set of principles should be considered in Athabasca University's sustainability plan.

5. Government investment – As part of strategic fiscal and capital planning, the Alberta government may consider investing in capital projects that would results in a sustainable model for the university, but only if supported through a strong business case, and after considered in the overall fiscal reality and capital priorities of the province.

6. Partnering opportunities – Explore collaboration or partnership with other institutions.

Less focus should be placed on the following as part of a sustainability plan.

7. Cost reductions (staff) – Financial savings identified through staff reductions or relocations.

8. Cost reductions or insolvency (institution) – Financial savings achieved by closing, relocating or repurposing the institution.

ENROLMENT IN SELECTED AMERICAN ONLINE UNIVERSITIES

Institution	State	2012 Distance Enrolment	2015 Distance Enrolment	Change from 2012 to 2015	Classification
American InterContinental University-Online	IL	14,170	11,560	-2,610	Private for-profit
American Public University System	WV	58,115	52,361	-5,754	Private for-profit
Arizona State University at Tempe	AZ	36,095	22,809	-13,286	Public
Ashford University	CA	76,722	42,046	-34,676	Private for-profit
Brigham Young University at Idaho	ID	11,763	33,551	21,788	Private nonprofit
Capella University	MN	35,754	34,365	-1,389	Private for-profit
College of Southern Nevada	NV	13,270	14,906	1,636	Public
Colorado Technical University-Online	CO	22,608	22,757	149	Private for-profit
Columbia College	MO	11,718	9,870	-1,848	Private nonprofit
Columbia Southern University	AL	19,933	20,823	890	Private for-profit
Columbus State Community College	OH	11,558	11,907	349	Public
CUNY Borough of Manhattan Community College	NY	16,546	1,465	-15,081	Public
Cuyahoga Community College District	OH	12,418	12,266	-152	Public
DeVry University-Illinois	IL	21,616	20,458	-1,158	Private for-profit
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Worldwide	FL	11,368	12,857	1,489	Private nonprofit
Everest University-South Orlando	FL	33,239	8,851	-24,388	Private nonprofit
Excelsior College	NY	39,728	43,123	3,395	Private nonprofit
Florida International University	FL	25,028	26,341	1,313	Public
Full Sail University	FL	23,486	19,939	-3,547	Private for-profit
Grand Canyon University	AZ	44,006	54,543	10,537	Private for-profit
Houston Community College	TX	17,524	19,111	1,587	Public
Ivy Tech Community College	IN	42,821	34,103	-8,718	Public
Kaplan University-Davenport Campus	IA	46,374	45,268	-1,106	Private for-profit
Liberty University	VA	69,935	72,519	2,584	Private nonprofit
Lone Star College System	TX	18,602	21,811	3,209	Public
Middle Tennessee State University	TN	11,416	6,088	-5,328	Public
National University	CA	12,775	12,116	-659	Private nonprofit
Northern Arizona University	AZ	12,544	11,769	-775	Public
Northern Virginia Community College	VA	19,152	13,421	-5,731	Public
Nova Southeastern University	FL	14,983	12,147	-2,836	Private nonprofit
Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus	PA	13,238	14,355	1,117	Public
Pima Community College	AZ	27,677	7,425	-20,252	Public
Portland Community College	OR	11,822	10,849	-973	Public

Institution	State	2012 Distance Enrolment	2015 Distance Enrolment	Change from 2012 to 2015	Classification
Rio Salado College	AZ	16,902	12,092	-4,810	Public
South University Savannah Online	GA	12,364	10,781	-1,583	Private for-profit
Southern New Hampshire University	NH	11,286	56,371	45,085	Private nonprofit
St. Petersburg College	FL	16,669	16,501	-168	Public
Tarrant County College District	TX	12,290	10,377	-1,913	Public
Thomas Edison State University	NJ	20,456	13,093	-7,363	Public
Tidewater Community College	VA	13,164	9,989	-3,175	Public
Troy University	AL	15,444	8,824	-6,620	Public
University of Central Florida	FL	21,782	33,034	11,252	Public
University of Florida	FL	23,180	28,838	5,658	Public
University of Maryland University College	MD	42,165	48,677	6,512	Public
University of Phoenix	AZ	256,346	162,003	-94,343	Private for-profit
University of South Florida-Main Campus	FL	16,241	20,993	4,752	Public
Valencia College	FL	13,985	17,216	3,231	Public
Wake Technical Community College	NC	11,853	8,642	-3,211	Public
Walden University	MN	50,209	52,799	2,590	Private for-profit
Western Governors University	UT	41,369	70,504	29,135	Private nonprofit

Source: Goldie Blumenstyk, "Who's Up and Who's Down in Online Education? *Chronicle of High Education,* May 3 2017 (http://www.chronicle.com/article/Who-s-UpWho-s-Down-in/239964)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This review provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities facing Athabasca University. I have not discussed the statistical information in detail in the text, but the data influenced my thinking.   Many readers will have questions about the background information, so I have provided selected material in the following tables and chart. The information presented herein demonstrates some of the key elements of the current AU situation, from the financial challenges associated with the declining surplus, the differential government support for AU students, the impressive enrolment numbers, the uneven enrolments in academic programs, and aspects of the faculty and staffing profiles within Athabasca University.

Figure 1: Athabasca University Financial Reserves

Table 1: Athabasca University Government Grants and Tuition and Fees, Percentage of Total Revenue and Expense, 2007 to 2017

Revenue by Category	Actual 2007	Actual 2008	Actual 2009
Government of Alberta grants	$31,839	$34,973	$39,287
Undergraduate student fees	33,485	36,844	39,070
Graduate student fees	12,282	13,153	15,138
Learning resource fee	8,884	9,306	9,527
Other	8,872	7,117	3,187
Total Revenue	**$95,362**	**$101,393**	**$106,209**
Government of Alberta grants as % of Total Revenue	33.4%	34.5%	37.0%
Tuition and Fees as % of Total Revenue	57.3%	58.5%	60.0%
Other as % of Total Revenue	9.3%	7.0%	3.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

RESTATED

Expense by Category	Actual 2007	Actual 2008	Actual 2009
Salaries and benefits	$59,828	$67,097	$77,536
Fees and purchased services	13,100	14,427	15,718
Materials and supplies	8,421	9,312	9,861
Communications and travel	6,541	7,346	7,600
Amortization expense	3,709	3,608	2,962
Facilities rental	1,079	1,605	1,864
Insurance, utilities and taxes	677	729	880
Scholarships	419	494	1,302
Total Expense	**$93,774**	**$104,618**	**$117,723**
Government of Alberta grants as % of Total Expense	34.0%	33.4%	33.4%
Tuition and Fees as % of Total Expense	58.3%	56.7%	54.1%
Other as % of Total Expense	9.5%	6.8%	2.7%
Total (Note: Surplus/Deficit for the year accounts for Total % variance)	101.7%	96.9%	90.2%

Actual 2010	Actual 2011	Actual 2012	Actual 2013	Actual 2014	Actual 2015	Actual 2016	Actual 2017
$43,003	$44,439	$43,709	$46,940	$43,182	$44,994	$46,424	$48,894
40,905	42,209	44,367	45,820	46,844	46,697	46,819	48,091
16,753	17,784	17,504	17,387	17,913	18,292	19,133	18,851
9,929	10,347	12,325	13,744	14,206	13,932	13,843	14,231
10,938	9,713	7,236	8,661	8,209	7,497	6,458	7,517
$121,528	$124,492	$125,141	$132,552	$130,354	$131,412	$132,677	$137,584
35.4%	35.7%	34.9%	35.4%	33.1%	34.2%	35.0%	35.5%
55.6%	56.5%	59.3%	58.1%	60.6%	60.1%	60.1%	59.0%
9.0%	7.8%	5.8%	6.5%	6.3%	5.7%	4.9%	5.5%
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

RESTATED   RESTATED

Actual 2010	Actual 2011	Actual 2012	Actual 2013	Actual 2014	Actual 2015	Actual 2016	Actual 2017
$89,243	$88,544	$85,234	$90,315	$86,385	$85,493	$91,068	$90,173
16,166	16,466	15,091	16,009	16,916	18,797	17,692	17,145
9,987	10,173	10,614	11,188	10,137	12,315	11,557	13,011
6,476	6,134	5,754	5,468	5,035	3,281	3,238	2,921
3,269	2,941	3,973	4,808	4,658	5,209	6,148	6,805
1,834	2,242	2,157	1,995	1,764	1,610	1,614	1,829
598	766	828	894	884	796	773	776
981	1,036	1,081	1,123	947	1,028	1,117	1,176
$128,554	$128,302	$124,732	$131,800	$126,726	$128,529	$133,207	$133,836
33.5%	34.6%	35.0%	35.6%	34.1%	35.0%	34.9%	36.5%
52.6%	54.8%	59.5%	58.4%	62.3%	61.4%	59.9%	60.7%
8.5%	7.6%	5.8%	6.6%	6.5%	5.8%	4.8%	5.6%
94.5%	97.0%	100.3%	100.6%	102.9%	102.2%	99.6%	102.8%

Table 2: Base Grants and Ongoing Conditional Grants by Institution

Actual $	1995 - 1996	1996 - 1997	1997 - 1998	1998 - 1999	1999 - 2000	2000 - 2001	2001 - 2002	2002 - 2003	2003 - 2004	2004 - 2005
By Provider	**742,806,686**	**721,513,222**	**734,923,191**	**755,754,909**	**776,229,071**	**824,982,173**	**881,773,715**	**943,685,885**	**1,029,274,288**	**1,089,685,655**
University of Alberta	223,529,000	215,964,000	219,955,000	224,017,000	225,916,000	240,343,000	255,216,000	252,868,000	282,602,000	305,755,000
University of Calgary	140,972,000	136,743,000	140,161,000	143,421,617	143,843,519	159,624,941	161,055,617	178,484,614	187,874,470	211,591,759
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	63,563,000	61,616,932	63,200,830	64,592,395	64,683,743	67,139,987	74,399,372	77,831,647	83,186,881	98,706,161
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology	55,650,000	54,316,000	55,294,000	54,908,542	56,741,616	58,202,000	65,033,000	69,792,000	80,498,000	84,513,000
University of Lethbridge	29,892,517	28,995,741	29,974,124	30,431,486	32,580,619	33,235,655	39,389,772	40,854,192	47,584,663	49,174,598
Grant MacEwan University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Deer College	16,932,190	16,399,004	16,687,977	17,132,160	17,470,822	18,384,542	20,584,576	21,857,614	23,177,898	23,361,131
Grant MacEwan College	23,613,821	22,905,406	23,498,051	24,097,432	27,816,965	28,692,936	33,651,462	39,664,670	43,786,389	45,023,767
Lethbridge College	14,793,737	13,564,751	14,493,424	14,460,524	15,753,942	16,356,328	18,156,334	22,696,416	22,972,696	23,519,450
Mount Royal College	27,109,024	27,061,784	27,738,327	28,370,332	27,292,784	28,335,683	30,483,354	37,391,390	42,495,573	43,880,498
Keyano College	14,518,466	14,079,923	14,291,791	14,605,357	14,850,556	16,201,170	17,630,730	18,509,176	19,628,065	19,993,645
Mount Royal University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Athabasca University	14,232,000	11,805,000	12,569,000	12,872,687	13,419,000	15,729,000	16,703,000	17,921,000	18,286,000	20,194,000
Grande Prairie Regional College	12,936,096	12,548,013	12,673,493	12,800,228	13,291,530	13,665,394	14,549,294	15,656,315	16,344,201	16,855,900
NorQuest College	9,125,266	10,066,148	11,509,142	11,552,469	12,399,434	13,451,470	15,103,037	16,544,800	18,328,078	18,398,986
Lakeland College	13,854,713	13,484,340	13,619,183	14,627,904	16,899,309	17,218,987	17,025,424	19,261,516	20,353,951	20,821,353
Bow Valley College	7,269,203	8,899,159	6,654,334	9,776,896	11,413,074	12,971,831	14,487,667	15,039,956	15,621,304	15,408,837
Medicine Hat College	10,229,638	9,922,749	10,021,976	10,233,470	10,691,768	11,227,322	13,289,657	14,238,107	15,294,372	16,157,662
Northern Lakes College	10,843,686	11,483,752	12,446,650	12,914,130	14,398,360	14,722,748	16,058,708	16,741,276	17,757,363	17,979,496
Olds College	10,909,815	10,582,521	10,928,084	11,150,154	11,710,693	11,805,717	12,811,867	13,802,327	14,662,365	15,072,219
Portage College	6,394,561	8,233,232	5,936,632	9,139,594	10,180,998	10,996,874	11,701,612	12,235,630	13,038,908	13,256,939
Banff Centre, The	11,883,244	8,826,747	8,981,215	9,127,609	9,127,609	9,371,825	5,131,901	10,872,808	11,154,261	11,367,511
Alberta College of Art and Design	5,589,800	5,422,106	5,516,988	5,641,677	5,688,166	5,911,031	6,490,618	6,910,898	7,135,477	8,072,352
Concordia University College of Alberta	3,698,823	3,587,858	3,623,737	3,766,958	3,814,065	4,336,294	4,615,684	5,148,630	6,294,826	6,466,385
Fairview College	10,306,773	10,043,006	10,189,162	10,719,150	10,826,779	11,042,479	11,779,448	12,404,463	13,244,677	0
King's University College, The	1,115,352	1,081,891	1,100,824	1,317,053	1,322,053	1,446,813	1,700,018	1,799,940	2,131,148	2,434,017
Canadian University College	837,440	897,459	912,759	1,031,667	1,049,249	1,376,909	1,418,068	1,572,113	1,629,702	1,680,989
Augustana Faculty of the U of A	3,006,521	2,982,700	2,945,488	3,046,418	3,046,418	3,191,237	3,307,495	3,586,387	4,191,020	0
St. Mary's University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ambrose University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taylor University College and Seminary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canadian Nazarene University College	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	All Years
1,268,532,250	1,426,382,026	1,553,285,438	1,703,152,058	1,824,766,383	2,029,984,553	2,072,539,189	2,147,939,021	2,037,149,158	2,090,679,537	**26,655,038,408**
371,145,000	406,105,000	444,133,000	487,469,000	514,879,000	575,864,000	598,160,000	611,063,000	589,015,000	594,320,000	**7,638,318,000**
236,596,625	276,246,101	299,358,678	330,303,992	356,046,916	419,758,490	429,425,377	452,648,088	427,137,488	434,328,242	**5,265,622,534**
111,912,882	122,868,515	136,337,684	146,268,061	140,518,473	147,157,995	147,753,823	150,708,900	145,047,548	146,069,848	**2,113,564,677**
97,116,000	109,599,491	107,432,716	116,818,725	124,834,849	132,298,366	132,298,366	139,939,223	134,888,018	139,063,822	**1,869,237,734**
57,499,796	66,205,164	72,642,195	81,786,986	87,568,234	99,334,414	100,493,973	102,871,914	97,054,603	98,592,942	**1,226,163,588**
0	0	0	0	86,691,028	104,418,609	104,901,314	107,872,793	103,803,117	103,803,117	**611,489,978**
28,774,138	32,962,586	36,190,653	40,265,328	42,411,164	43,860,446	47,287,455	48,819,500	46,707,527	47,475,510	**606,742,221**
53,424,798	62,411,129	70,268,084	81,321,180	0	0	0	0	0	0	**580,176,090**
26,020,782	29,883,017	34,557,896	38,061,319	41,067,809	42,682,363	43,237,921	44,310,239	43,359,957	43,565,277	**563,514,182**
50,022,418	55,630,942	61,552,061	68,044,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	**555,408,170**
22,240,923	26,289,835	31,878,430	33,933,576	38,712,890	38,553,867	38,476,565	39,559,858	37,754,671	38,182,953	**509,892,447**
0	0	0	0	72,564,000	90,045,000	85,433,000	88,766,000	84,085,000	86,923,000	**507,816,000**
23,390,000	26,475,000	30,184,000	33,279,000	35,416,000	38,529,000	38,823,000	39,825,000	37,897,000	39,157,000	**496,705,687**
18,389,982	19,973,443	20,881,620	22,379,291	38,921,418	40,725,920	43,373,654	46,225,110	44,987,229	45,881,452	**483,059,583**
21,152,829	24,837,427	27,834,251	30,151,243	35,609,659	40,180,446	40,580,446	41,672,513	39,803,164	40,718,872	**479,019,680**
22,619,913	25,291,009	27,003,003	29,255,623	31,173,228	31,656,988	32,471,919	33,340,065	32,021,662	32,082,308	**464,082,398**
20,619,001	22,301,713	24,731,354	27,699,938	28,975,008	32,019,953	34,381,269	36,859,909	37,540,281	38,885,656	**421,556,343**
19,361,746	21,254,507	23,083,537	25,271,603	28,058,153	28,243,930	29,527,028	30,617,571	29,309,189	29,309,189	**385,343,174**
20,552,572	22,176,950	23,855,369	24,880,244	28,890,249	27,256,095	27,928,084	28,602,995	4,510,010	29,699,295	**383,698,032**
16,768,268	18,723,574	20,074,945	21,680,589	22,987,831	24,358,049	26,487,065	27,317,159	27,012,683	26,399,887	**355,245,812**
14,191,877	15,628,292	16,790,532	18,241,427	19,380,295	20,700,073	21,636,788	22,467,024	21,452,641	21,795,723	**293,399,652**
12,049,564	12,844,770	13,806,015	14,947,541	15,955,021	15,955,000	16,105,000	16,427,100	16,472,288	16,472,888	**246,879,917**
8,941,749	9,876,935	10,586,358	11,392,766	12,080,530	12,081,000	12,081,000	12,644,236	11,924,848	12,029,204	**176,017,739**
6,905,104	8,510,125	8,714,582	9,310,767	10,129,334	11,496,392	8,681,049	11,804,310	11,964,453	12,110,942	**144,980,318**
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**100,555,937**
2,628,012	3,432,497	3,643,030	2,919,632	4,705,968	4,371,443	4,371,443	4,551,631	4,450,962	4,450,962	**54,974,689**
2,124,743	2,535,365	2,657,555	2,985,417	3,258,439	3,204,532	3,249,104	3,389,944	3,325,471	3,487,100	**42,624,025**
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**29,303,684**
1,393,033	1,476,615	1,565,212	2,301,651	1,558,477	2,768,826	2,861,077	3,071,201	2,982,329	3,232,329	**23,210,750**
799,601	714,318	2,173,234	2,183,159	2,372,410	2,463,356	2,513,469	2,563,738	2,642,019	2,642,019	**21,067,323**
1,091,293	1,280,121	1,349,444	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3,720,858**
799,601	847,585	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1,647,186**

Table 3: Total Revenue by Institution

Actual $	1995 - 1996	1996 - 1997	1997 - 1998	1998 - 1999	1999 - 2000	2000 - 2001	2001 - 2002	2002 - 2003	2003 - 2004
Alberta College of Art and Design	8,492,643	8,799,769	9,759,171	10,423,759	11,835,955	12,478,321	13,351,792	14,634,787	15,288,450
Ambrose University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Athabasca University	26,742,000	27,634,000	30,507,000	34,368,368	39,355,000	46,384,000	53,640,000	61,810,000	69,965,000
Augustana Faculty of the U of A	11,763,110	11,423,834	10,497,135	10,949,731	12,258,309	13,000,839	14,245,886	14,002,880	15,455,927
Banff Centre, The	30,219,754	32,183,063	34,234,891	36,076,716	38,902,197	39,924,573	18,439,405	42,600,188	43,748,813
Bow Valley College	14,680,604	17,414,720	20,190,826	20,858,692	24,072,356	27,138,411	31,298,397	36,037,990	36,750,071
Canadian Nazarene University College	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canadian University College	6,553,573	7,961,111	8,055,366	8,322,438	11,103,399	13,465,326	12,692,372	14,780,786	13,644,002
Concordia University College of Alberta	13,101,916	12,126,712	12,457,445	12,919,941	14,743,051	15,738,638	16,384,535	17,145,495	18,564,709
Fairview College	16,868,630	16,600,894	16,964,446	17,796,842	18,628,090	19,139,211	19,949,696	21,973,100	22,503,851
Grande Prairie Regional College	21,855,368	22,664,766	23,585,766	24,190,603	24,696,307	25,977,282	27,342,252	28,310,256	30,561,276
Grant MacEwan College	60,171,056	64,841,205	69,830,938	74,072,609	82,464,816	90,660,336	96,270,784	116,572,409	127,464,854
Grant MacEwan University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Keyano College	26,146,290	27,077,111	27,742,008	26,765,782	28,930,530	30,411,318	32,435,660	33,718,396	36,109,968
King's University College, The	5,243,069	5,423,187	5,826,577	6,281,705	6,338,691	7,028,986	7,753,306	8,078,978	9,045,144
Lakeland College	27,491,605	26,490,047	26,595,632	26,316,416	29,591,589	31,952,033	37,242,508	40,377,054	43,976,975
Lethbridge College	32,063,258	34,391,211	38,133,061	39,482,681	41,608,118	45,145,783	47,823,653	51,287,770	54,291,172
Medicine Hat College	19,161,013	19,881,809	21,176,316	23,385,046	23,896,628	25,606,468	27,928,181	29,989,285	32,109,871
Mount Royal College	61,480,330	66,517,756	74,818,110	78,997,973	84,744,981	90,735,657	100,322,762	113,825,369	122,327,075
Mount Royal University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NorQuest College	20,055,274	21,648,947	21,687,375	24,465,533	26,387,291	31,109,500	33,152,988	36,801,063	38,418,335
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	106,000,000	110,685,979	116,047,817	124,182,155	134,082,201	143,948,386	155,995,003	169,327,729	182,065,751
Northern Lakes College	15,676,720	15,021,807	18,274,250	20,456,557	21,924,448	22,452,906	23,669,172	24,154,266	24,826,185
Olds College	21,382,758	22,566,736	25,407,667	27,175,036	28,251,981	28,800,631	30,469,875	31,572,288	32,380,619
Portage College	8,478,627	10,317,667	12,476,955	14,746,095	16,804,529	17,865,511	19,491,834	20,191,319	22,116,333
Red Deer College	34,768,293	34,396,667	36,491,421	38,856,876	41,875,093	42,749,513	50,247,284	55,087,021	57,530,579
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology	98,522,000	107,105,000	121,227,000	127,919,368	132,264,885	148,752,000	169,619,000	177,963,000	189,832,000
St. Mary's University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taylor University College and Seminary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
University of Alberta	547,292,000	559,125,000	589,368,000	652,979,000	653,072,000	731,469,000	815,513,000	825,733,000	999,214,000
University of Calgary	380,139,000	398,709,000	434,500,000	463,326,481	491,796,433	555,266,753	578,212,784	585,764,079	691,726,991
University of Lethbridge	62,087,618	66,200,694	70,409,899	71,094,858	75,298,950	83,978,150	95,804,488	104,545,136	113,740,299
Total	**1,676,436,509**	**1,747,208,692**	**1,876,265,072**	**2,016,411,261**	**2,114,927,828**	**2,341,179,532**	**2,529,296,617**	**2,676,283,644**	**3,043,658,250**

2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	All Years
16,393,109	17,146,618	18,895,441	19,922,745	20,871,393	21,464,025	21,506,707	21,428,402	21,333,347	20,306,251	20,598,619	**324,931,304**
7,633,213	7,818,638	6,989,744	11,948,181	13,727,087	12,851,571	13,878,562	14,358,746	15,026,500	16,942,947	16,944,608	**138,119,797**
79,563,000	88,348,000	95,362,000	101,393,000	106,209,000	121,528,000	124,492,000	125,141,000	132,552,000	130,354,000	131,025,000	**1,626,372,368**
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**113,597,651**
45,532,252	47,650,478	47,344,153	53,065,568	56,035,250	51,662,705	54,115,751	57,686,885	57,853,984	59,810,654	62,156,183	**909,243,463**
40,408,455	47,265,954	52,238,708	57,993,751	66,026,404	75,341,958	77,035,502	80,265,724	91,967,679	104,301,732	95,514,938	**1,016,802,872**
2,341,342	3,274,679	3,312,817	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**8,928,838**
13,804,342	13,940,069	14,906,976	17,046,989	17,931,757	17,818,489	18,943,251	19,105,066	20,476,388	21,578,771	20,485,766	**292,616,237**
19,792,446	21,573,302	22,115,985	23,527,763	24,147,478	24,740,922	25,178,853	20,414,439	25,356,184	25,957,356	27,765,685	**393,752,855**
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**170,424,760**
32,316,782	33,115,119	36,315,711	39,378,870	42,928,627	71,686,161	69,655,334	71,529,198	75,529,809	72,456,605	70,900,258	**844,996,350**
133,516,174	149,382,044	165,437,079	184,654,011	198,944,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1,614,283,314**
0	0	0	0	0	216,541,540	222,611,614	222,134,159	228,975,022	227,920,687	230,359,657	**1,348,542,679**
37,657,463	41,643,005	47,830,881	61,399,543	66,413,325	71,926,756	77,976,387	76,365,599	84,214,974	82,243,784	77,799,940	**994,808,720**
9,841,087	10,562,305	11,013,638	12,253,093	10,200,888	14,219,221	14,348,799	15,053,258	16,370,249	16,297,860	17,901,069	**209,081,110**
45,509,254	50,257,196	54,361,807	56,590,144	61,927,724	67,722,919	73,639,032	65,282,157	67,759,015	66,302,821	67,238,503	**966,624,431**
55,738,773	60,188,492	63,990,741	70,262,431	74,318,763	82,220,893	81,800,341	82,393,341	84,955,757	83,293,681	83,765,668	**1,207,155,588**
34,719,380	37,779,618	41,847,094	44,448,305	47,282,186	51,761,893	51,947,790	55,651,310	55,766,589	54,050,795	55,300,752	**753,690,329**
129,591,428	140,029,246	151,412,055	169,862,000	178,584,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1,563,248,742**
0	0	0	0	0	205,576,000	209,817,000	208,210,000	223,737,000	213,838,000	214,641,000	**1,275,819,000**
39,043,672	43,190,992	48,095,675	57,266,131	70,148,090	77,716,433	75,044,304	77,535,488	79,812,539	76,040,420	78,125,313	**975,745,363**
209,744,064	232,183,428	264,601,656	292,645,217	310,678,866	308,541,997	312,770,724	314,836,562	321,886,759	357,379,028	348,970,625	**4,516,573,947**
25,443,480	28,633,490	30,557,542	34,357,673	37,240,345	43,450,022	41,889,585	39,909,422	43,445,882	41,991,310	41,974,344	**595,349,406**
33,068,061	35,163,787	37,886,197	42,200,534	41,708,133	49,298,840	54,297,177	52,134,001	53,567,000	54,835,000	56,370,000	**758,536,321**
22,752,692	25,348,810	27,150,928	27,954,959	33,183,179	34,413,945	33,666,931	34,521,940	36,682,881	35,233,306	35,190,995	**488,589,436**
59,350,273	63,257,289	69,842,420	78,346,286	88,047,178	96,657,322	93,698,114	92,125,499	98,206,840	90,550,174	95,797,250	**1,317,881,392**
202,129,000	215,105,000	235,600,724	251,856,036	274,997,446	285,954,206	286,067,248	292,975,193	322,206,314	337,660,637	357,688,532	**4,335,444,589**
5,071,875	7,070,454	7,830,208	7,041,988	6,939,519	7,169,534	10,417,272	8,898,534	9,788,250	11,882,723	11,314,479	**93,424,836**
4,520,941	5,526,401	5,412,866	4,905,839	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**20,366,047**
1,053,620,000	1,181,781,000	1,257,734,000	1,285,438,000	1,419,910,000	1,606,691,000	1,644,740,000	1,689,366,000	1,727,799,000	1,764,535,000	1,830,774,000	**22,836,153,000**
728,630,676	762,272,583	826,908,154	837,456,436	945,772,897	1,034,130,276	1,065,762,432	1,129,620,240	1,191,091,476	1,211,397,864	1,245,190,779	**15,557,675,334**
122,639,851	136,293,292	148,732,702	151,548,285	154,330,959	189,156,890	191,530,997	188,910,828	198,047,893	203,401,657	199,249,239	**2,627,002,685**
3,210,373,085	**3,505,801,289**	**3,793,727,902**	**3,994,763,778**	**4,368,505,493**	**4,840,243,518**	**4,946,831,707**	**5,055,852,991**	**5,284,409,331**	**5,380,563,063**	**5,493,043,202**	**69,895,782,764**

Table 4: Full Load Equivalent (FLE Students), Alberta Post-Secondary System, 2004-05 to 2015-16

FLE Count	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Baccalaureate and Applied Studies	18,404	18,155	17,836	18,082	19,177	20,827
Comprehensive Academic and Research	68,059	69,171	70,514	70,469	71,442	74,523
Athabasca University	6,463	6,742	7,184	7,193	7,526	7,701
Augustana Faculty of the U of A	952	1,042				
University of Alberta	30,374	31,222	32,338	32,684	32,844	33,886
University of Calgary	23,446	23,190	24,044	23,654	24,384	26,025
University of Lethbridge	6,823	6,974	6,949	6,938	6,689	6,911
Comprehensive Community	26,074	25,953	24,502	25,141	26,592	29,781
Independent Academic	3,293	3,305	3,025	2,976	2,843	2,954
Polytechnical	21,601	22,336	23,861	24,589	25,401	24,831
Specialized Arts and Culture	938	943	963	972	985	999
Grand Total	**138,369**	**139,863**	**140,702**	**142,229**	**146,440**	**153,917**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Grand Total
21,737	21,495	21,676	21,377	21,452	21,847	**242,064**
76,355	77,079	79,674	80,044	78,707	79,270	**895,308**
7,892	7,875	8,268	8,504	8,366	8,469	**92,183**
						1,994
34,554	34,589	36,294	36,688	36,497	36,364	**408,332**
26,859	27,722	28,341	28,047	27,084	27,489	**310,286**
7,050	6,894	6,772	6,805	6,760	6,949	**82,512**
28,483	28,095	27,950	27,225	28,057	29,181	**327,034**
3,043	3,103	3,146	3,060	3,250	3,600	**37,599**
25,354	25,065	25,740	25,941	26,860	28,070	**299,651**
1,003	996	958	923	918	954	**11,552**
155,975	**155,833**	**159,144**	**158,571**	**159,244**	**162,922**	**1,813,208**

Table 5: Tuition and Grant Revenue Per FLE for AU and Comparator Institutions, 2014-2015

Public Institution	Ongoing Grant/Reg FLE	Ongoing Grant/Tot FLE	RegTuition/Reg FLE	Grant % Rev	Total Rev/FLE	Tot Expense/FLE	Net/FLE
Alberta College of Art and Design	$13,118	$13,107	$4,564	60.2%	$21,757	$23,248	$(1,491)
Athabasca University	$8,774	$4,680	$6,766	31.0%	$15,074	$15,363	$(289)
Banff Centre, The	$32,363	$32,363		28.9%	$112,093	$121,452	$(9,359)
Bow Valley College	$9,092	$6,696	$3,489	45.0%	$14,884	$15,045	$(161)
Grande Prairie Regional College	$30,165	$23,569	$3,831	68.5%	$34,420	$37,248	$(2,828)
Grant MacEwan University	$8,448	$8,448	$4,840	45.4%	$18,597	$18,012	$586
Keyano College	$38,259	$29,076	$4,584	55.3%	$52,585	$61,825	$(9,239)
Lakeland College	$21,517	$16,709	$5,668	54.8%	$30,487	$33,251	$(2,764)
Lethbridge College	$11,972	$11,098	$3,325	55.4%	$20,033	$21,011	$(978)
Medicine Hat College	$15,877	$14,212	$4,218	60.0%	$23,706	$27,958	$(4,252)
Mount Royal University	$9,483	$9,484	$5,188	41.2%	$23,006	$23,263	$(257)
NorQuest College	$13,874	$9,860	$4,146	53.3%	$18,498	$18,572	$(74)
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	$16,580	$11,443	$4,441	47.4%	$24,125	$26,482	$(2,357)
Northern Lakes College	$26,144	$23,963	$2,948	76.2%	$31,450	$34,157	$(2,707)
Olds College	$21,120	$19,033	$4,114	51.6%	$36,854	$39,923	$(3,069)
Portage College	$28,869	$26,950	$3,445	67.8%	$39,737	$44,060	$(4,323)
Red Deer College	$18,437	$13,497	$3,747	56.5%	$23,884	$26,873	$(2,989)
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology	$12,183	$9,867	$4,832	44.1%	$22,366	$24,185	$(1,820)
University of Alberta	$16,839	$16,284	$5,651	32.7%	$49,864	$48,100	$1,764
University of Calgary	$16,814	$16,036	$5,744	35.3%	$45,482	$43,984	$1,498
University of Lethbridge	$14,585	$14,585	$5,384	53.0%	$27,518	$29,237	$(1,719)

| Independent	Grant/FLE	Grant% Rev	Total Rev/FLE	Total Expense/FLE	
Ambrose University College	$6,094	16.2%	$37,589	$45,544	$(7,955)
Canadian University College	$8,588	17.3%	$49,641	$50,163	$(523)
Concordia University College of Alberta	$9,675	44.0%	$21,971	$20,968	$1,002
King's University College, The	$7,779	25.4%	$30,633	$31,478	$(846)
St. Mary's University College	$5,515	29.5%	$18,711	$19,120	$(409)

Figure 2: AU Staff and Faculty 2006-07 to 2014-15

Legend: Academic, FT — Academic, PT — Mngt/Exec — Support/temp — Casual — Tutors
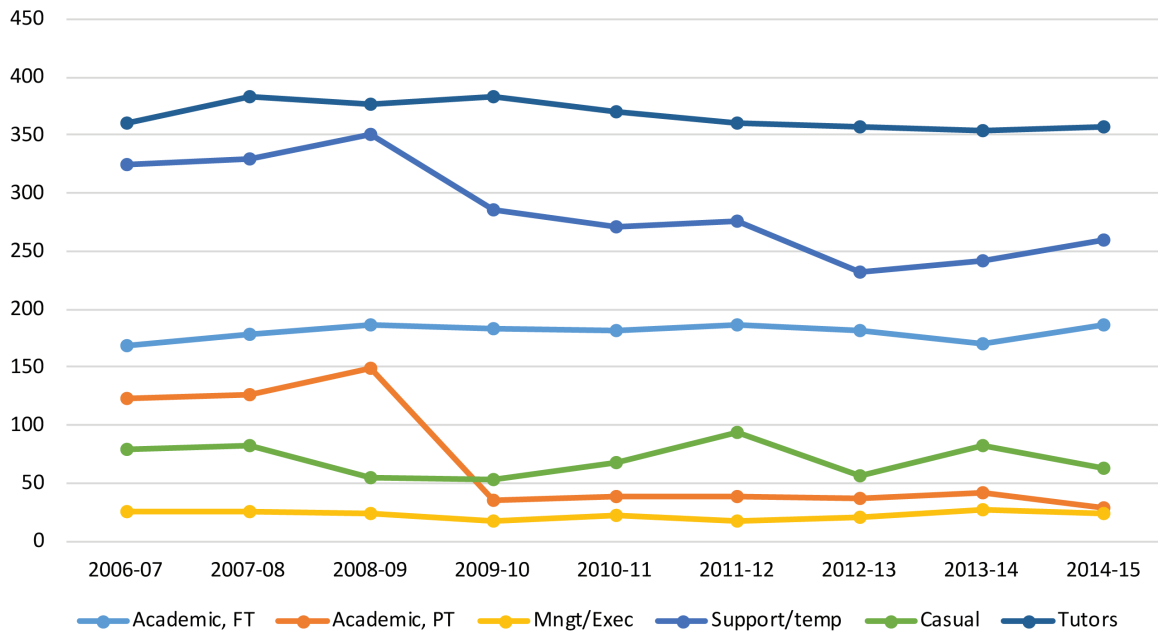
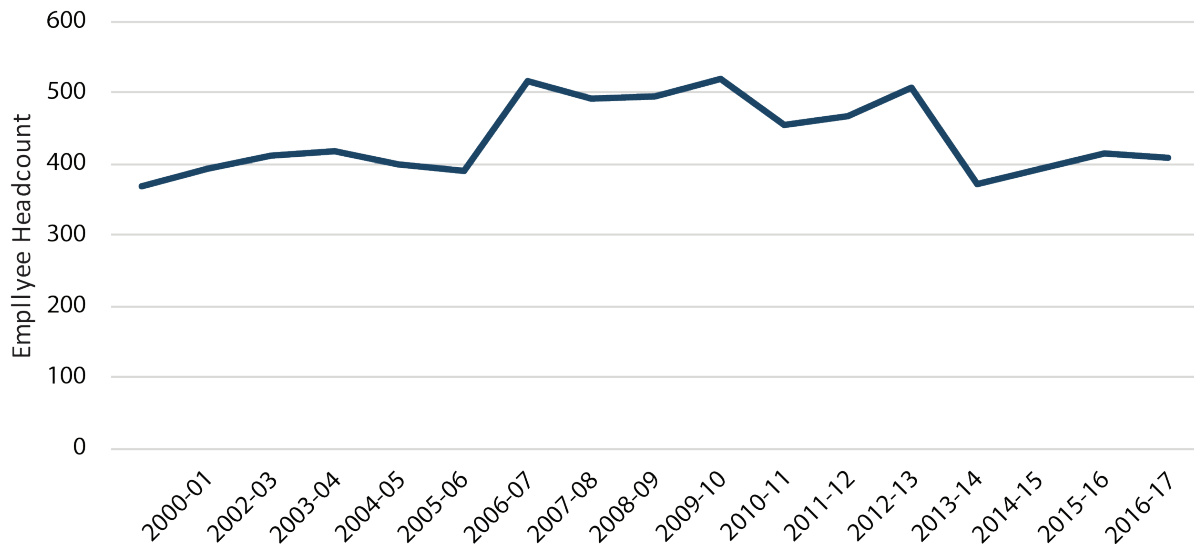**Figure 3:** Athabasca Based Employees 2000-01 to 2016-17

Y-axis: Empllyee Headcount

Table 6: Indigenous Student Count* 2006-07 to 2015-16

Fiscal Year	Undergraduate	Graduate	TOTAL
2006-07	848	37	885
2007-08	876	50	926
2008-09	916	64	980
2009-10	921	74	995
2010-11	961	70	1,031
2011-12	1,046	90	1,136
2012-13	1,068	78	1,146
2013-14	1,085	95	1,180
2014-15	1,123	119	1,242
2015-16	1,123	107	1,230

* Based on self-declaration at time of admission and being active in course during fiscal year.

Table7: Admitted* Visiting and Non-declared (Open Studies) Student Count 2006-07 to 2015-16

Fiscal Year	Non-Program	Visiting	Total Open
2006-07	5,752	8,698	14,450
2007-08	6,054	8,091	14,145
2008-09	6,080	8,767	14,847
2009-10	6,036	8,418	14,454
2010-11	6,292	8,770	15,062
2011-12	6,261	9,155	15,416
2012-13	6,129	8,842	14,971
2013-14	5,960	8,822	14,782
2014-15	5,744	8,093	13,837
2015-16	5,633	7,579	13,212

* Based on having applied and enrolled in a course.

Table 8: Yield Ratios (Graduated Students as a Percentage of Enrolled Students), Based on 200% of Allocated Program Time

Masters (2 Year)	Number Enrolled*	Number Graduated Within 48 months	Rate
2008-09	958	316	33.0%
2009-10	1,040	345	33.2%
2010-11	913	290	31.8%
2011-12	945	331	35.0%
2012-13	1,035	371	35.8%
Bachelor (3 Year)	**Number Enrolled**	**Number Graduated Within 72 months**	**Rate**
2005-06	1,432	107	7.5%
2006-07	1,491	84	5.6%
2007-08	1,556	116	7.5%
2008-09	1,273	95	7.5%
2009-10	1,222	80	6.5%
Bachelor (4 Year)	**Number Enrolled**	**Number Graduated Within 96 months**	**Rate**
2003-04	2,528	196	7.8%
2004-05	2,787	223	8.0%
2005-06	2,993	219	7.3%
2006-07	3,184	234	7.3%
2007-08	3,190	249	7.8%

* Student who were admitted during the year and have registered for at least one course in the relevant level of studies. Posted graduation rates based on effective (earned at least 6 AU credits) students with completed credentials are higher.

Table 9: AU Full-Load-Equivalent and Individual-Student Enrolment

Year	UG FLE	Unique UG	Grad FLE	Unique Grad	Total FLE	Sum of Unique
2005-06	5,450	31,615	1,293	3,513	6,743	35,128
2006-07	5,919	34,597	1,264	3,527	7,183	38,124
2007-08	5,987	35,261	1,209	3,470	7,196	38,731
2008-09	6,183	35,948	1,343	3,510	7,526	39,458
2009-10	6,217	35,437	1,484	3,771	7,701	39,208
2010-11	6,316	35,876	1,606	3,972	7,922	39,848
2011-12	6,283	36,234	1,592	4,016	7,875	40,250
2012-13	6,579	37,829	1,689	4,366	8,268	42,195
2013-14	6,814	38,309	1,690	4,402	8,504	42,711
2014-15	6,659	37,017	1,707	4,366	8,366	41,383
2015-16	6,686	36,522	1,782	4,469	8,469	40,991

Table 10: Top 25 Courses by Net Course Starts Per Fiscal Year

Percent Top 25	31.5%	30.8%	32.0%	30.6%	30.4%	31.0%	30.2%	30.4%	29.8%	30.0%
Course	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
ACCT253	1,641	1,654	1,656	1,553	1,380	1,493	1,467	1,445	1,509	1,339
ACCT351	666	641	669	608	506	583	554	566	495	483
ACCT352			438							
ACCT355	632	646	651	649	559	579	609	559	530	505
ACCT451		488	577	607	577	546	525	584	597	463
ACCT453	616	551								
ACCT460	781	617	581	584	454					
ADMN232	888	934	877	847	1,016	1,182	1,144	1,183	1,109	1,229
ADMN233	908	993	999	950	1,047	1,153	1,107	1,240	1,072	1,050
ADMN417	455	484								
BIOL204			439		453	487	494			
BIOL235	661	585	769	898	891	927	986	1036	1,081	1,048
CHEM217								471		
CMIS245					462	685	667	642	862	814
CMIS351	559	564	619	560	580	593	560	531	480	459
ECON247	626	725	758	727	751	818	773	848	735	749
ECON248			594	546	529	623	563	581	597	589
ENGL211	545	527	575	634	667	560	522	557	490	510
ENGL255	1,262	1,285	1,441	1,521	1,774	1,713	1,736	1,889	1,749	1,796
HLST320									505	547
LGST369	574	572	587	521	471	524	518	543	525	626
MATH215	1,432	1,446	1,505	1,661	1,625	1,812	1,749	1,740	1,655	1,782
MATH265	578	597	566	553	565	587	565	610	523	566
MGSC301						475			489	
MKTG396	519	545	531	507		501		517	506	553
NURS322				462						
NURS328	573	533	576	469	515	599	522			
NUTR331	876	664	658	546	611	511	565	624	580	541
ORGB364	499						474	475	492	504
PHIL152										560
PHIL252	484	491		474	536		480	586	558	542
PHIL333	596	585	559	568	530	531	538	612	647	639
PSYC289	818	766	856	846	816	806	858	828	713	746
PSYC290	547	612	753	736	721	743	852	959	877	898
TAXX301	611	649	616	604	581	606	515	516		

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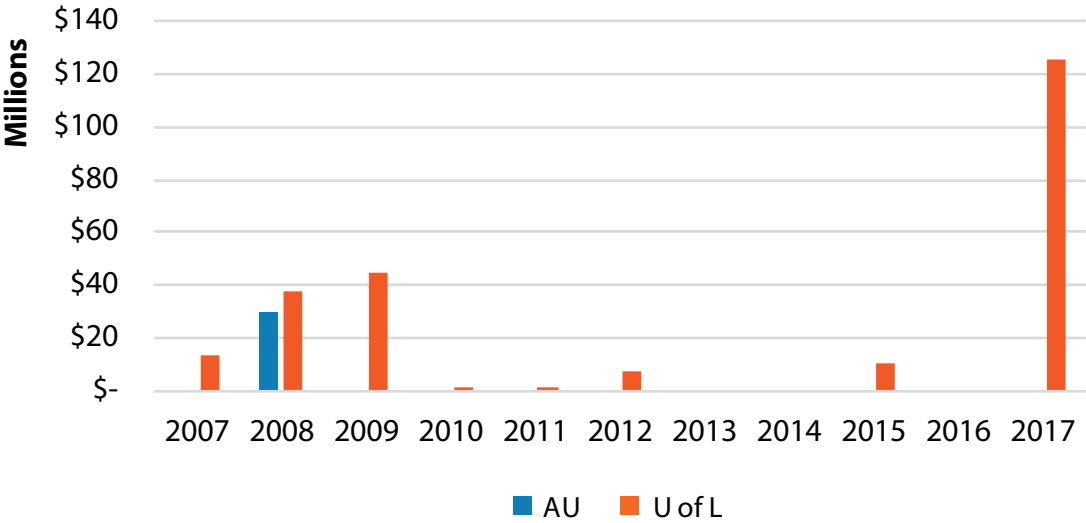**Figure 4:** Capital Funding: AU Compared to Univeristy of Lethbridge 2007-17

Figure 5: Infrastructure Maintenance Program Grant: AU Compared to Univeristy of Lethbridge 2007-17
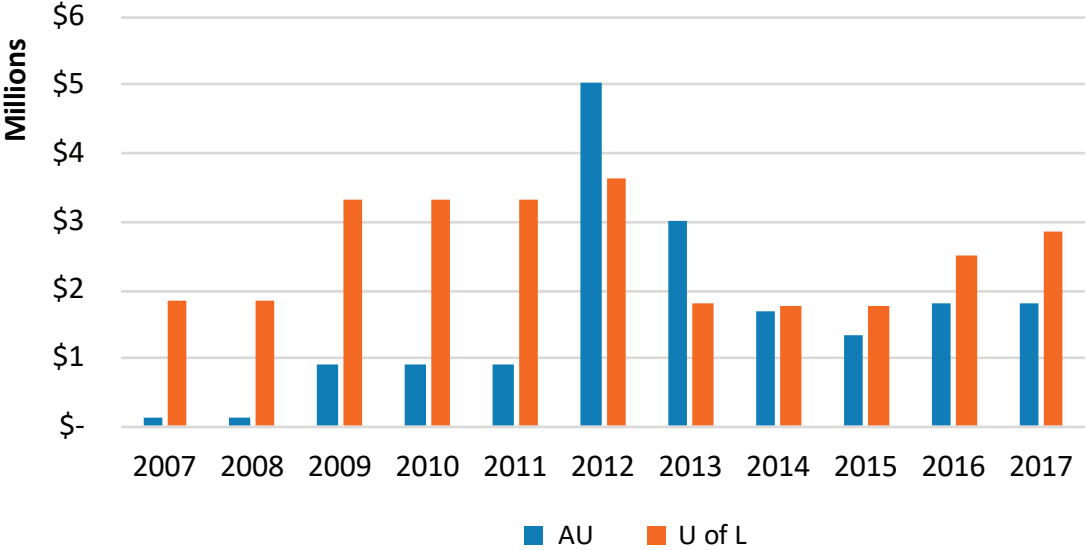
Table 11: Undergraduate Degree Programs by Full-Load-Equivalent Count

Program	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Bachelor of Nursing	288.2	315.2	364.9	367.7	329.9
Bachelor of Arts 4 Year	231	237.9	270	286.8	263.5
Bachelor of Commerce	180.9	165.5	185	221.3	261.8
Bachelor of Professional Arts	156	169.5	146.7	148.9	209.8
Bachelor of Management 3 Year[1]	252.9	227.8	212.5	215.6	183
Bachelor of Arts 3 Year	102.7	116	121.4	120.1	137.7
Bachelor of General Studies	77.233	75.4	75.9	80.6	76.4
Bachelor of Management 4 Year	51.5	51.8	65.9	69.3	66.2
Bachelor of Science[2]	112.2	112.9	113.3	126.2	141.7
Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations	32.1	39.8	54.6	62.3	63.8
Bachelor of Health Administration	18.5	24	23.5	26.3	32.4

1 Bachelor of Management Man – 3 Year includes Bachelor of Administration students completing after program closed to new admissions.

2 Bachelor of Science Includes General and Human Sciences and Computing and Information Systems majors and new programs in Architecture and Applied Mathematics.

Table 12: Graduate Degree Programs by Full-Load-Equivalent Count

Program	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Master of Nursing	210.6	238.2	271.	269.9	320.7
Master of Business Administration	344.0	302.8	318.2	332.9	317.1
Master of Arts (Integrated Studies)	176.6	196.4	208.6	214.2	209.4
Master of Health Studies	154.9	150.7	169.3	187.6	177.9
Master of Counselling	89.2	41.2	100	140.7	199.7
Master of Education	122.2	99.9	91.3	99.9	94.6
Master of Science (Information Systems)	87.8	95.2	85.4	86.1	86.2
Doctor of Education			6.5	16	29.5
Doctor of Business Administration				9.7	13.9

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
328.4	360.6	413.6	451.8	505.3
243.1	254.1	267.9	255.8	261.2
276.6	291.3	312.5	319.9	327.7
199.5	205.1	205	196.6	181.9
155	160.1	156	148.7	144
129.7	136.3	127.5	117.7	118.4
65.1	73	72.7	80.1	74.8
79.6	90.1	94.5	101.3	100.9
129.8	146.1	151.3	154.6	158
70.8	92.1	110.9	117.9	126.7
30	33.1	42.1	45.2	54.3

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
371.9	381.7	410.1	472.4	521.9
319.8	321.7	315.9	292.9	301.5
192.0	205.4	190.1	182.5	167.4
144.2	193.8	192.8	191.1	173.1
185.5	210	226.5	248	248.2
97.6	124.2	125.3	100.6	110.6
73.6	72.1	66.3	59.8	64.5
26.501	26.5	28.667	26	31.5
19.1	18.7	26	20.2	20.3

Table 13: Distribution of Students by Province

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Ontario	13,228	13,484	13,914	13,946	14,121	14,518	14,518	14,248	13,708	13,056
Alberta	12,626	12,713	12,996	13,089	13,735	14,578	14,922	15,413	15,166	15,489
British Columbia	3,287	3,255	3,414	3,382	3,433	3,462	3,590	3,656	3,712	3,635
Saskatchewan	1,745	1,843	1,927	1,876	1,812	1,918	2,001	1,816	1,869	1,788
Nova Scotia	1,156	1,219	1,197	1,213	1,210	1,202	1,107	1,153	1,137	1,151
Manitoba	1,138	1,174	1,201	1,095	1,086	1,117	1,133	1,154	1,156	1,231
Quebec	525	583	618	653	690	753	806	858	839	824
New Brunswick	591	653	600	605	597	618	563	549	501	480
Newfoundland and Labrador	359	355	412	391	418	398	418	402	437	421
Northwest Territories	238	274	273	221	259	289	252	246	259	277
Prince Edward Island	104	152	172	164	165	187	168	162	147	167
Yukon Territory	142	141	119	146	131	115	123	111	127	111
Nunavut	51	44	57	54	52	76	58	54	59	72
Unknown	7	7	6	3	2	1	1			
NF	3	2	1	1				1		
Total	35,200	35,899	36,907	36,839	37,711	39,232	39,660	39,823	39,117	38,702

Table 14: Distribution of Students By Country (in descending order by unique count)

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Canada	35,200	35,899	36,907	36,839	37,711	39,232	39,660	39,823	39,117	38,702
United States	585	520	483	428	413	448	393	400	364	334
Unknown	813	659	514	366	256	257	204	132	14	6
China	61	66	63	42	27	17	24	32	23	36
Korea, Republic of	25	27	29	31	30	32	35	24	24	17
United Kingdom	41	30	23	30	25	23	17	25	29	24
Australia	30	41	26	29	25	34	33	37	23	25
United Arab Emirates	29	30	25	39	29	28	24	31	23	26
Bermuda	15	15	16	24	28	26	24	26	19	22
Japan	29	21	23	20	26	26	29	26	20	23
Hong Kong	35	44	27	28	16	17	13	16	9	11
Malaysia	59	37	44	34	22	14	10	4	6	5
Taiwan, Province of China	44	37	31	24	13	14	13	10	3	5
Saudi Arabia	16	15	14	17	18	18	15	11	19	14
Germany	21	18	13	17	16	21	21	20	20	20
Qatar	15	17	19	15	13	11	17	20	13	13
India	2	3	4	2	12	8	11	11	9	15
Switzerland	12	12	10	13	10	8	6	5	8	9
Singapore	7	6	10	14	5	9	10	7	6	10
Bahamas	5	7	7	10	11	11	4	11	8	7
France	8	4	4	6	6	4	6	4	8	9
New Zealand	5	8	5	3	3	9	7	13	6	8
Pakistan	4	7	4	3	6	7	4	4	4	1
Trinidad and Tobago	4	3	6	7	7	5	3	5	5	6
Cayman Islands	8	7	8	8	6	7	7	6	7	4
Mexico	3	2	7	7	3	7	8	6	7	6
Netherlands	7	9	11	9	5	8	6	7	5	3
Norway	6	2	6	4	3	3	6	5	4	5
Nigeria	4	2	3	4	2	3	6	7	9	10
South Africa	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	5	5
Greece				3	6	7	5	5	16	16
Thailand	7	8	7	8	10	6	1	3	2	1
Turkey	5	2	3	2	4	3	6	7	6	2
Israel	2	5		1	3	6	2	3	4	6
Vietnam	4	2	3	2	4	4	1	4	4	4
Italy	4	4	6	5	6	5	2	1	3	3
Egypt	3	2	3	4	3	2	2	1	4	5
Ireland	7	4	6	2	2	3	2			2
Jamaica	3		1	8	3	4	4	1	3	2
Indonesia	1	1	2	2	3	8	3	2	2	2
Kuwait	2	3	4	4	2	4	3	2	4	5
Denmark	2	2	1	5	4	5	7	2	3	3
Philippines	3	4	4	2		7				1
Brazil	4	2	3	3	4	2	2	2	2	4

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Spain	4	4	2	3	4	2	4	3	4	4
Kenya	3	3	2	4	3	3	3	5	4	4
Russian Federation	1		2	3	2	3	8	3	2	2
Sweden	3	4	4	2		3	1	2	2	2
Belgium	3	2	5	7	2	3	3	1	2	2
Barbados	2	1	2	2	4	2	3	1	1	2
Bahrain	1	1	2	3	5		2	1	1	2
Saint Lucia	2			5	6	4	2	2	2	2
Guyana	1			3	2	1	1	1	3	3
Poland	1	2		2	2	2	2	3	1	
Grenada				4	5	4	2	4	5	1
Belize	1		2	1	1	2	1	3	3	2
Jordan	3	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	4
Macao	5	4	3	2	1		3		1	1
Colombia	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	4	2
Portugal	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	3	3	3
Dominica		1	1	5	4	1			1	2
Antigua and Barbuda			1	1	1	1	2	2	3	4
Mauritius		1	2	1	1	2	3	1	2	2
Austria		1	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	2
Bangladesh	1	1	1	2	1	2		1		1
Czech Republic	1	1	1	3	3	2	1	2	2	2
Oman	1	1	1		1		1	1		
Costa Rica	2	2	1	1	2		1			1
Lebanon	1		1	1		1				1
Ecuador		1		2	1	1	1			
Sri Lanka			1	1	3		1			
Venezuela		2	1		2	1			1	
Syrian Arab Republic	1	1	1	3	3					
Panama	1					1		1	1	1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines					2				2	1
Kazakhstan			1		1		2			
Cambodia				1	2	2		2	2	2
Morocco	1	2	2	1	1				1	1
Chile	1		1	1	2	1	1	1	2	
Botswana	1		1					1	3	1
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1	1		1		1		1		
Tanzania, United Republic of	1		1	1	2	1	1	1	1	
Ethiopia						1	1			2
Peru		1		1			1	1	1	
Finland		1	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	
Ghana	1			1		1				1
Aruba			1		1	1				1

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Namibia									1	3
Albania								2		1
Slovenia	2	1	1	2	1					
Cyprus			1	1	1			1	1	
Malawi		1	1	1					1	
Iraq							1	1	1	2
Sudan		2	1		2		1	1	1	1
Virgin Islands, British				2			1	1	1	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	1					1			
Haiti	1				1	1				
Nepal										3
Eritrea	3	3	3							
Argentina	1		1	1						
Nicaragua	1	1						1		
Zimbabwe	1			1	1	1	1	1		2
Turks and Caicos Islands			1				1			
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	1									1
Brunei Darussalam	1						1			
New Caledonia			1				1			
Virgin Islands, U.S.				1			1			
Congo	1			1						
Serbia							1	1	1	2
Hungary					1		1	1		1
Iran, Islamic Republic of					1				1	
Afghanistan						1		1		
Luxembourg			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Malta		1	1	2	1					
Zambia				2						
Guatemala					1			1		
Estonia		1	1	1	2		1	1		
Romania			1							
Maldives	1									
Madagascar									1	
Azerbaijan	1									
Belarus						1		1		
Mozambique				1						
Northern Mariana Islands			1							
Honduras									1	
Tunisia			1							
Congo, the Democratic Republic of the	1	1	1	1						
Dominican Republic	1									

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Latvia								1	1	
Puerto Rico						1				
French Polynesia					1	1				
Montserrat				1						
Liberia					1		1			
Gambia				1						
Côte d'Ivoire	1									
Iceland							1	1		1
Croatia	1									
Burkina Faso								1	1	1
Angola	1	1				1				
Ukraine				1	1	1	1		1	
Bolivia	1									
Georgia	1									
Suriname							1			
American Samoa				1	1					
Swaziland			1	1						
Moldova, Republic of					1					
Niger									1	
Yemen	1									
Cuba				1						
Rwanda				1	1					
Armenia			1							
Cameroon		1								
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of							1			
Grand Total	**37,216**	**37,648**	**38,461**	**38,231**	**38,905**	**40,443**	**40,738**	**40,837**	**39,950**	**39,517**

Independent Third-Party Review
of Athabasca University