

Once upon a time, you couldn't use the words
university and **flexible** in the same
sentence. Well that's not the case any more.
At AU, it's education on your terms, not ours.



Athabasca University, Canada's Open University, is dedicated to the removal of barriers that restrict access to and success in university level study and to increasing equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide.

AU is committed to excellence in teaching, research and scholarship and to being of service to the general public.

Through the achievements of its students and the efforts of its faculty and staff, AU stands out as a provider of high quality post-secondary education.

Like most Canadian universities, AU provides post-secondary learning opportunities for Albertans and other Canadians and for students from other countries.

It is **unique**, however, in guaranteeing access to university level study to a broad range of non-traditional students: anyone 16 or over is eligible for admission to undergraduate study.

AU's flexible learning model allows students to enrol in programs or register for courses at any time of the year and to work at their own pace, studying at home, at work or wherever they may find themselves.

From its beginning, AU has consistently pioneered new approaches to post-secondary learning: through its open philosophy, through its outreach, through its revolutionary methods of course and program design and delivery and through its acceptance and adoption of technology-based alternatives to traditional instructional channels and contexts.



AU student Lisa
Bachelor of Management
Halifax, Nova Scotia

History

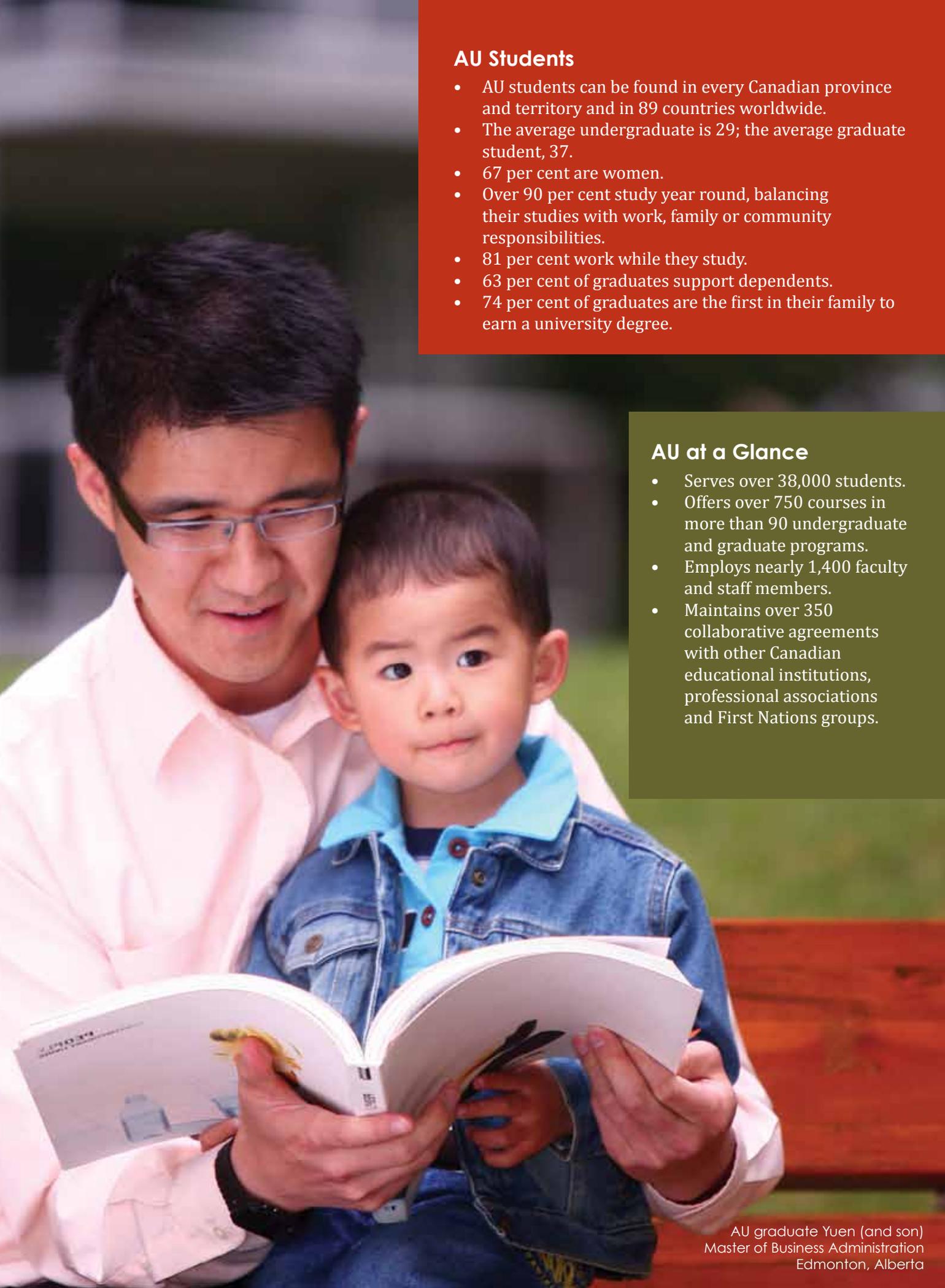
AU was established by Order in Council of the Government of Alberta on June 25, 1970. Originally conceived as a traditional, campus-based institution, AU changed course in 1972 through a pilot project to test the concept of an open, distance university.

The first AU course, World Ecology, was offered in 1973, and AU's first Convocation, for two graduates, was held in 1977. The university achieved self-governing status as Alberta's fourth public university on April 12, 1978.

By 1984, AU had outgrown its original facilities in Edmonton and moved 145 km north to the Town of Athabasca. Learning centres were established in Calgary, Edmonton and Fort McMurray to enable students to receive first-hand educational support services and to write invigilated examinations. The Fort McMurray location closed in 2000.

During the 1990s, in keeping with its mandate to explore new ways of delivering post-secondary education to students anywhere, any time, AU pioneered the use of computers to deliver online courses, and in 1994, launched the world's first online executive MBA, now one of the largest programs of its kind in Canada and rated among the world's best.

Over the past decade, AU has grown dramatically and continued to expand its course and program offerings and broaden its use of information technology in course delivery. Today, AU is one of the world's foremost online and distance education institutions, serving over 38,000 students worldwide.



AU Students

- AU students can be found in every Canadian province and territory and in 89 countries worldwide.
- The average undergraduate is 29; the average graduate student, 37.
- 67 per cent are women.
- Over 90 per cent study year round, balancing their studies with work, family or community responsibilities.
- 81 per cent work while they study.
- 63 per cent of graduates support dependents.
- 74 per cent of graduates are the first in their family to earn a university degree.

AU at a Glance

- Serves over 38,000 students.
- Offers over 750 courses in more than 90 undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Employs nearly 1,400 faculty and staff members.
- Maintains over 350 collaborative agreements with other Canadian educational institutions, professional associations and First Nations groups.

AU graduate Yuen (and son)
Master of Business Administration
Edmonton, Alberta

A young man with short brown hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt and blue jeans, is sitting on a staircase. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows a modern building with a glass and blue metal facade.

Programs

AU offers over 700 courses in more than 90 undergraduate and graduate programs.

At the undergraduate level, AU offers the following degrees:

- Bachelor of Arts (25 majors and concentrations)
- Bachelor of Commerce (general or major programs)
- Bachelor of General Studies (arts and science or applied studies)
- Bachelor of Health Administration
- Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations
- Bachelor of Management (general and major programs)
- Bachelor of Nursing (Post LPN or Post RN)
- Bachelor of Professional Arts (four majors)
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Science, Computing and Information Systems

Undergraduate certificate or diploma programs are available in a wide range of related fields, including heritage resources management, English and French language studies, computing and information systems, labour studies, accounting, marketing, e-commerce, financial services and health development administration.



At the graduate level, AU offers the following degrees:

- Doctor of Education (in distance education)
- Doctor of Business Administration
- Master of Arts – Integrated Studies
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Counselling
- Master of Distance Education
- Master of Health Studies
- Master of Nursing
- Master of Science – Information Systems

Graduate diplomas and certificates are offered in a number of related areas, including heritage resources management, legislative drafting, instructional design, counselling, distance education technology, management, project management and advanced nursing practice.

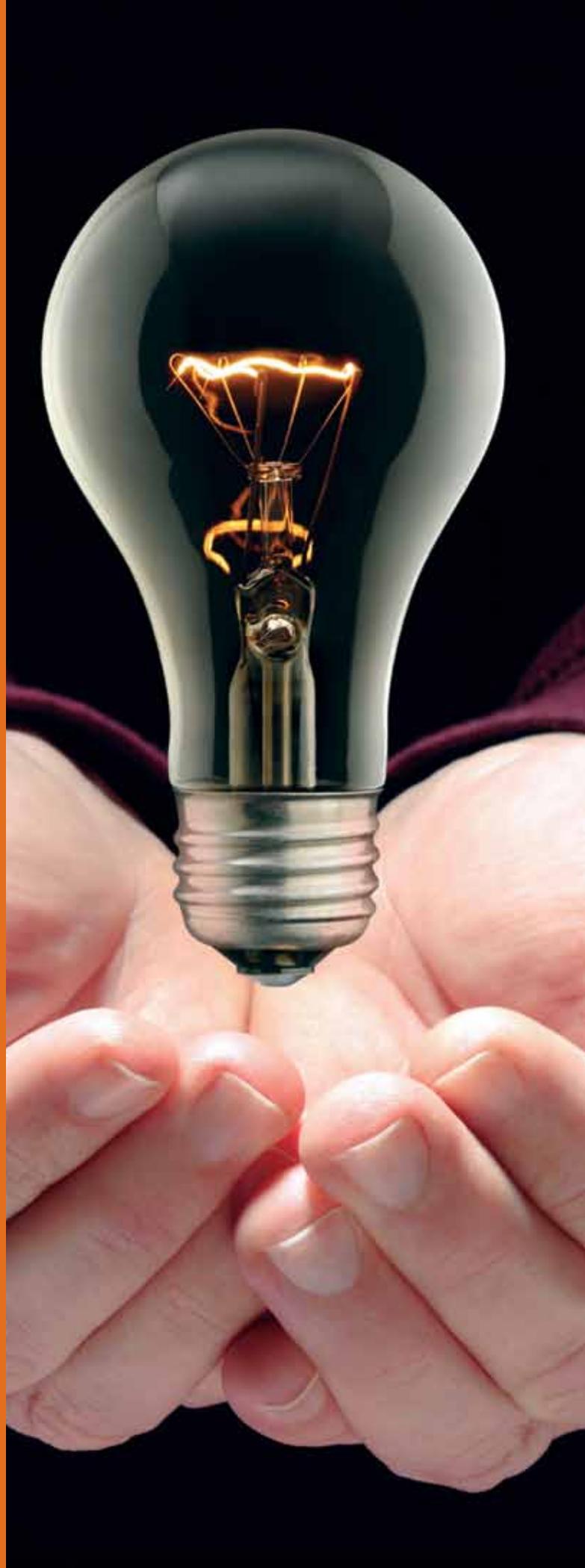
AU student Phoenix
Master of Nursing
Vancouver, B.C.

Research

AU is committed to excellence in research and scholarship. Through the discovery, dissemination and transfer of new knowledge and the engagement of students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, the university integrates research with creative teaching, thereby informing the curriculum and providing opportunities for highly qualified graduates to promote innovation and to participate more fully in society. Mission critical research in the scholarship of teaching and learning in OPEN and distance environments is the primary focus of AU's research activity; however, the university also actively supports and maintains high standards in discipline-based research. As a university with a growing graduate student population, now over 3,500 strong, AU ensures that the research and publication records of academic staff members are comparable to those of other public universities in Canada.

AU is home to four research institutes:

- The Canadian Institute of Distance Education Research publishes the *International Review of Research on Open and Distance Learning*, an open access, online, peer-reviewed e-journal.
- The Athabasca River Basin Research Institute is an innovative interdisciplinary research centre that studies the Athabasca River Basin, Alberta's largest river basin.
- The Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute focuses on creating knowledge about and fostering innovation in the use of digital technologies to support learning.
- The Project Management Research Institute initiates cutting-edge, multi-disciplinary research in project management, enabling project management scholars, organizations and practitioners to work together to address the significant challenges confronting project managers and project organizations.





Collaborations

AU has a long-standing practice of working collaboratively with other Canadian and international post-secondary educational institutions, with professional associations and employer groups and with First Nations institutions and communities to facilitate access to university-level study. Over 350 formal collaborative agreements are now in place. In addition, students enrolled at other post-secondary institutions make extensive use of AU's courses and educational services to help them complete their degrees. AU is a founding member of

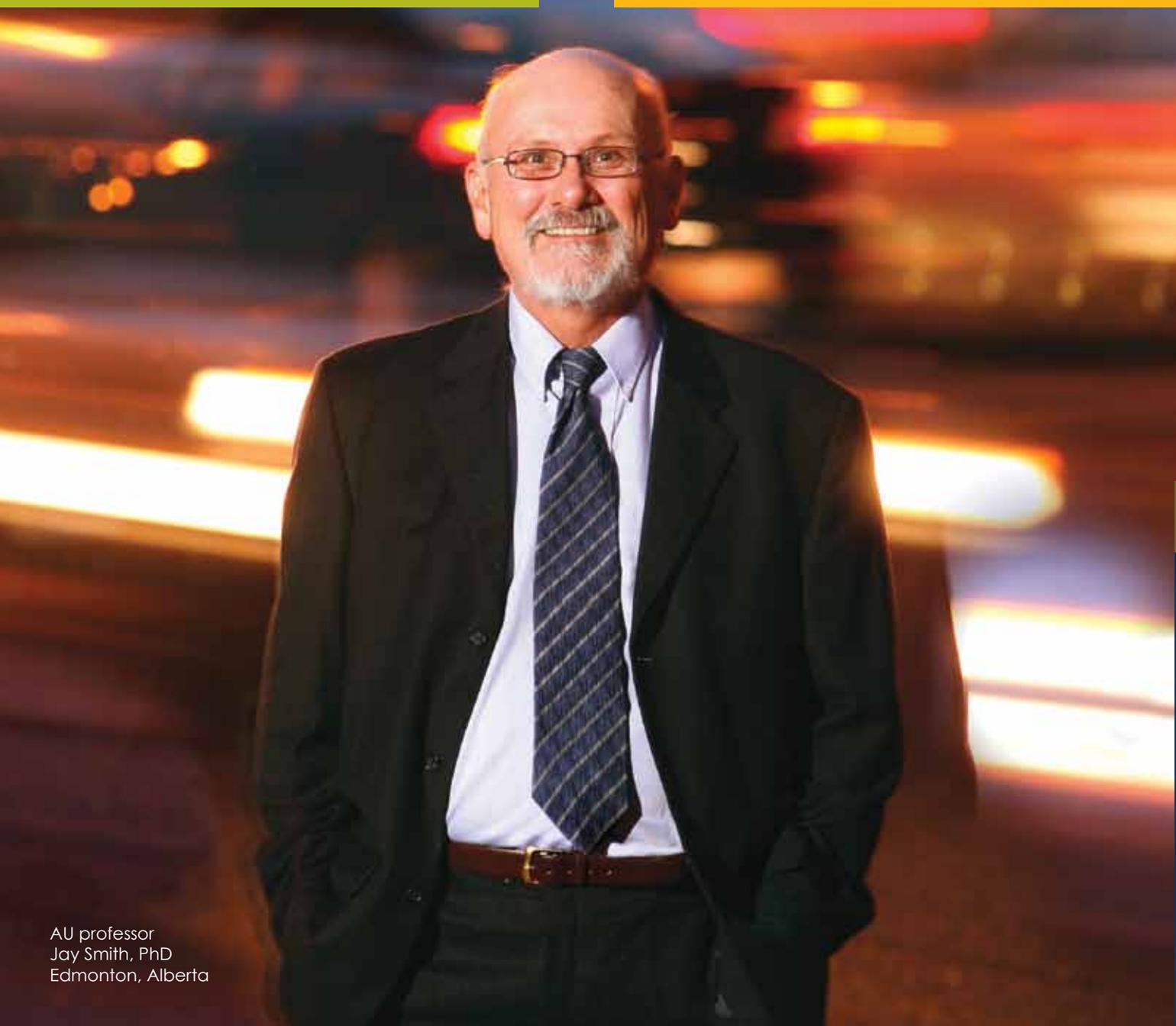
- Canadian Virtual University, a consortium of nine leading Canadian universities with an interest in e-learning
- Alberta-North, a partnership of post-secondary institutions bringing courses and programs to students in northern Alberta, Nunavut, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories
- University of the Arctic, an international co-operative network of universities, colleges and other organizations committed to higher education and research in the circumpolar North

A Comprehensive University

AU is one of four public comprehensive universities recognized by the Government of Alberta. The university reports to the government through the Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology, and its quality assurance mechanisms and program proposals are reviewed by the Campus Alberta Quality Council. AU is also recognized by the Government of British Columbia and is fully accredited in the United States by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. No other Canadian public university holds this level of foreign accreditation.

AU Press

AU's long-term commitment to open access and to scholarly research are supported by AU Press (www.aupress.ca). Founded in 2007 as Canada's first 21st century university press, AU Press is dedicated to disseminating knowledge emanating from scholarly research to a broad audience through open-access digital media in a variety of formats from journals and monographs to websites and podcasts. All publications are peer reviewed to ensure scholarly rigour.



AU professor
Jay Smith, PhD
Edmonton, Alberta



AU student Alyssa
Bachelor of Arts
Taichung, Taiwan

excellence

Through the achievements of our students and the efforts of our faculty and staff members Athabasca University stands out as a provider of high quality post-secondary education.

openness

We provide post-secondary learning opportunities to all Canadians and to students from other countries. We are unique, however, in guaranteeing access to university-level study to a broad range of non-traditional students.

flexibility

Our flexible learning model means that students can start most courses anytime of the year and study at home, work or wherever they may find themselves.

innovation

From our beginning in 1970, we have continued to pioneer new approaches to post-secondary learning: through our open philosophy, through our outreach, through our revolutionary methods of course and program design and delivery and through our acceptance and adoption of cutting-edge technologies.

excellence openness flexibility innovation

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