



**Athabasca  
University**

**Comprehensive Institutional Plan**

2017-2020

**July 27, 2017**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 8, 2017, the Athabasca University (AU) community received the *Independent Third-Party Review, Final Report with Recommendations*, authored by Dr. Ken Coates. The review provides an optimistic vision of AU and its future and affirms the University's vital role in Alberta. The review also outlines AU's challenges and emphasizes that change is essential for AU to thrive and contribute to a vibrant and accessible provincial post-secondary system. AU will meet its future with vision, energy, and optimism.

The AU community of scholars, staff, students, and alumni is passionate and confident about the University's future. This passion and confidence will fuel our transformation and revitalization. Over the next year, we will build on the University's history and original mandate through reinvention, development, and refinement. The opportunities for AU are endless: we recognize the ever-growing interest in open and flexible education and educational technology, and the evolving and increasing need for retraining and skills development in the new economy. These realities provide considerable potential for growth and enhancement, particularly in open access and specialized programming.

It will be a year of dramatic change and new approaches at AU. Our institutional priorities for the year to come include addressing the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review*, completing the *AU Master Plan*, and adopting an integrated planning framework to support strategic decision-making. Completion of these priorities will define our aspirations as a university and will transform and guide us through our various evolutions and innovations in the years ahead.

## ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This *Comprehensive Institutional Plan* was prepared under the Board's direction in accordance with legislation and associated ministerial guidelines, and in consideration of all policy decisions and material, economic, or fiscal implications of which the Board is aware.

*Original signed by Vivian Manasc*

Vivian Manasc  
Chair, the Governors of Athabasca University

July 27, 2017

## INSTITUTIONAL MANDATE\*

\*Approved by the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, November 17, 2009.

Founded in 1970 and operating as a Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution under the authority of the Alberta *Post-secondary Learning Act*, Athabasca University is a public, board-governed, open and distance education university which serves students throughout Alberta, across Canada and around the world. Working as a partner within Campus Alberta, Athabasca University is committed to collaborating with other key stakeholders to ensure a seamless and responsive advanced education system that provides high-quality learning opportunities in support of lifelong learning.

The University offers a range of courses and programs leading to graduate and undergraduate degrees, certificates and diplomas in the humanities, the social sciences, the sciences, technology, business and the health disciplines.

As an open university, Athabasca University seeks to remove barriers to undergraduate and graduate education. It offers flexible enrolment opportunities for learners, regardless of age, gender, culture, income, disability, career and family obligations, geographic location or educational background. As a distance education university, Athabasca University provides flexibility for lifelong learners who cannot or choose not to undertake residential post-secondary education. The University offers learners the opportunity to interact with students across Canada and around the world through programs in established and emerging areas as it seeks to meet the needs of career professionals, develop research expertise and create knowledge that fosters a global outlook among its graduates.

Athabasca University provides high-quality, interactive learning environments that include a variety of online and other media technologies for individualized and cohort learning. The university's library and tutorial services and extensive student support services that facilitate access and increase learner success are integral aspects of a quality open and distance education system. Similarly, its course designs and technology applications are based on current research in open and distance education, pedagogical advances in lifelong learning and contemporary developments in online learning technologies. The University actively pursues technological innovations that can enhance its teaching, research and administrative functions.

The University provides undergraduate degree completion opportunities for university transfer students and college diploma graduates through credit co-ordination, credit transfer, prior learning assessment and associated forms of learning accreditation. It supports collaborations such as its degree completion agreements with colleges and partnership with Alberta-North. These collaborations, together with its participation in initiatives such as the Canadian Virtual University, reflect Athabasca University's long-standing commitment to adult and lifelong learners, to Aboriginal communities, to learners in remote, rural and northern areas, to under-served urban populations and to program students at other universities who seek courses to accelerate degree completion. The University also acquires and maintains accreditation in other Canadian provinces and in appropriate international jurisdictions.

Athabasca University pursues and demonstrates excellence in research and scholarship, viewing research as central to the creation and mobilization of knowledge, the enhancement of its programs, the education of its students, the betterment of its community and the development of its faculty and future scholars. Besides its international reputation for research in all aspects of open and distance education and learning technologies innovation, the University is developing notable strength in interdisciplinary research in several areas such as Canadian studies, globalization and cultural studies, indigenous education, space and environmental sciences, project management, and nursing and health management. Aspects of technological change are integral to many of these theme areas. By supporting and conducting research activity in all program areas, Athabasca University makes significant contributions to cultural, scientific and professional development in Alberta and beyond.

Athabasca University's academic, professional and support staff engage in professional service within the education system at local, provincial, national and international levels. The University encourages its members to serve a wide range of communities through activities such as volunteerism, community based research, involvement in local community organizations and participation in virtual learning communities.

## MISSION STATEMENT

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

## CONSULTATION PROCESS

AU's Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic assumes overall responsibility for the process of preparing the *Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP)* and leading it through the review and formal governance approval process. Producing the *CIP* is a collaborative process that involves input from all divisions across the University.

The 2017-2020 *CIP* was prepared and shared through several rounds of consultations. The review process included participation of all stakeholders, including students, alumni, faculty, and staff. Internal consultations involved the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU), Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA), Deans' Group, Executive Group, General Faculties Council Academic Planning, Policy, and Standards Committee, General Faculties Council Academic Learning Environment Committee, Deans' Council, Administrative Council, General Faculties Council, the Board Finance and Property Committee, and the full Board of Governors.

The 2017-2020 *CIP* is also informed by the *Independent Third-Party Review*, which was based on extensive consultations. Over 250 faculty and staff submitted their comments to Dr. Ken Coates and over 500 people, including AU students and alumni, participated in the discussions. Externally, the review process included consultations with the Ministry of Advanced Education, senior administrators at other Alberta post-secondary institutions, including Indigenous colleges, political representatives

from northern Alberta and from the Town and County of Athabasca, and several professional associations that collaborate with AU.

## GOALS, PRIORITY INITIATIVES, AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

### INTRODUCTION

AU remains steadfastly focused and committed to a bright and resilient future. We have never lost sight of why we exist and the impact we have on learners and their communities. At its core, the University enables learners to harness the power of knowledge through education so that they and their communities may reach their highest potential. We recognize that knowledge, enabled through education, fuels individuals and, in turn, their communities, both large and small. Knowledge invigorates and fosters developments and innovations. This contributes to the social, environmental, and economic strength and diversity of Alberta, as well as tolerance and critical thought.

Although higher education plays a critical role in public prosperity and social progress, many people continue to face significant barriers to accessing university programs. For some, the pressures of everyday life may limit their time and ability to leave home or employment to study. For others, breaking their connection to their community and culture—even temporarily—is too large a sacrifice. In some cases, an individual’s prior academic record, or lack thereof, may limit their ability to gain entry into highly competitive programs.

AU was built on the premise of knowledge without boundaries. For nearly 50 years, we have created access and equality for all learners regardless of background or circumstance. At AU, knowledge is blind to personal circumstance or background, and learning opportunities are delivered *to* learners, allowing them to stay in their communities. We believe people need only one academic requirement: the passion to learn.

Our goal for the years to come is to pursue excellence, ensuring that the University plays a leadership role as an architect of the future of accessible adult learning in Alberta and beyond. As we have done before, we will leave behind the art of the possible and embrace the art of the imagination in meeting the needs of our learners and the communities we serve.

### ACCESSIBILITY

AU is learner-centered and committed to improving access to education for students. By offering flexible online learning opportunities, we ensure that students from varied backgrounds and with diverse abilities and credential levels have an equal opportunity to access post-secondary education. This open mission is at the heart of AU. Wherever our students are, our campus is there.

The *Independent Third-Party Review* reaffirms AU’s integral role in closing the persistent gap in post-secondary education participation rates among Albertans from varied socio-economic backgrounds. AU removes barriers to learning to help ensure that every Albertan can be successful in their path to post-secondary completion. Many students who responded to the *Independent Third-Party Review*

highlighted that if it was not for AU's open mission and flexible entry system, they would not be able to pursue university education. For many, the unattainable becomes attainable because of AU. We are committed to expanding our open access activities to ensure that every Albertan can fulfill their career aspirations. Fully achieving our open mission requires reinvestment by the Government of Alberta as outlined in our *Capital Plan* and the *Independent Third-Party Review*.

Academic priorities that provide students with a supportive and accessible learning environment remain the focus of the University. At each turn, we look to break down the systemic barriers that Albertans may face in pursuing a university education.

Over the next six months, AU will undertake a comprehensive review of all its programs and courses to ensure that program and course structure reflects its mission and supports access. Our focus will be on continuing to expand efforts to provide learning opportunities for lifelong learners and on increasing our efforts to offer career-focused educational opportunities. Reflecting the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review*, a revised, focused, and sustainable program mix analysis will be completed by December 15, 2017. This analysis will form the basis of a strategic program mix plan that will support innovation, excellence, responsiveness, and programmatic creativity.

In support of accessibility, AU is adopting universal design for learning principles in course and service design processes. Through inclusive design, AU recognizes that each student learns differently and that everyone can benefit from having a choice of learning formats, flexible assessments, and tools to help organize new information and skills.

As part of our ongoing work to support learner success, the University recently redesigned its Web pages to provide better tools for current and prospective students to discover AU programs and courses. We have also piloted automated email communications, online webinars, and in-person events that assist learners to clearly access and navigate relevant information in planning their post-secondary education and career paths at AU. These initiatives have produced extraordinarily positive results.

Our plans for the year to come also include increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) to more effectively guide students through the process. We recognize that people learn in many different ways and in many different places and that PLAR can be a powerful tool to engage learners and foster access to further education and training that prepares them for the new economy.

The University continues to support Indigenous learners through various initiatives. Indigenization of the curricula through responsive academic programming is under way. We are committed to greater collaboration through partnerships with northern colleges and with northern and Indigenous communities to address regional educational needs—a recommendation outlined in the *Independent Third Party-Review*.

We endeavour to support reconciliation and decolonization through a new Speaker's Series entitled "Kiskinwahatoyak," which translates to "teaching each other." The series is intended to examine the

2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC’s) *Calls to Action*, their future impact on education, and how knowledge holders, universities, and learners can work towards fruition of the TRC’s recommendations. The University is also in the early stages of establishing an Indigenous Advisory Circle to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous peoples’ perspectives in the direction and governance of AU. Other initiatives, such as cultural and Indigenous awareness training for faculty and staff, are in early development.

AU has a strong reputation for serving students with disabilities. Learners with a variety of learning challenges benefit from AU’s flexible, adaptive technology-supported learning environment, where they can learn and achieve university credit at their own pace. Over the last five years, the number of students registered with Access for Students with Disabilities has increased by almost 200 percent (now totaling nearly 3,800 students).

Providing appropriate mental health support in an online environment is also critical for AU. Good health is vital to learning and student success. In the coming year, we will administer a mental health and well-being survey to our students to better understand the complex issues some of them face. The results will contribute to the development of a comprehensive strategy for promoting student mental health and well-being at AU.

### Accessibility Goals, Priority Initiatives, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

Goal 1: IMPROVE LIFELONG LEARNING PATHWAYS FOR DEGREE COMPLETION, ESPECIALLY IN INDIGENOUS, RURAL, AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES.			
Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
(P1) Develop Indigenous-centered and -informed educational opportunities to enable Indigenous learner success.	(EO1) Support Indigenization through responsive academic programming, reflecting the <i>Calls to Action</i> of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.	(PM1) Initiated collaboration agreements with First Nations colleges.	December 1, 2017
		(PM2) Completed MOUs with willing Indigenous partners.	March 1, 2018
(P2) Increased meaningful partnerships with Campus Alberta.	(EO2) Coordinated approach to the provision of college and university degree programming designed to meet the needs of northern students and communities.	(PM1) Completed collaboration agreements with northern Alberta colleges.	December 1, 2017
		(PM2) Completed MOU’s with willing	March 1, 2018

<b>(P3)</b> Increase provincial awareness and recognition of AU’s open and flexible learning model (differentiated value; renewed narrative of “open.”)	<b>(EO1)</b> Raise the profile of AU within Alberta.	northern Alberta colleges.	March 30, 2019
	<b>(EO2)</b> Increased applications and registrations of Alberta-based learners.	<b>(PM1)</b> Increased unprompted market recognition of AU in Alberta.	
		<b>(PM2)</b> Increased number of learners registering and enrolling at AU.	

**Goal 2: REALIGN PROGRAMS TO REFLECT AU’S UPDATED MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL VISION.\***  
*\*Also a quality goal.*

Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
<b>(P1)</b> A comprehensive program mix review based on program quality, program health, and program viability.	<b>(EO1)</b> A sustainable, strategic, and quality program mix that is consistent with the University’s mandate and enables access to meet the needs of learners.	<b>(PM1)</b> A comprehensive list of programs to be renewed and enhanced, sustained, expanded, reduced, and/or closed.	December 15, 2017
	<b>(EO2)</b> Enable innovation, excellence, responsiveness, and programmatic creativity.	<b>(PM2)</b> The identification and submission of new program proposals for approval by redeploying resources stemming from PM1.	March 30, 2018
<b>(P2)</b> Expand program offerings to include programs focused on career-relevant learning.	<b>(EO1)</b> Increased access and registrations.	<b>(PM1)</b> Open Continuing Education Unit.	Summer 2018

### Goal 3: SUPPORT STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH.

Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
(P1) Student Mental Health	(EO1) Increased support for student mental health and wellness.	(PM1) Complete National College Health Assessment (NCHA) research survey.	December 2017
		(PM2) Completed strategy to support student mental health and wellness.	March 2018

## QUALITY

As a Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution (CARI), AU provides learning opportunities at all levels (undergraduate, masters, and doctoral) and across a breadth of disciplines. Year after year, more than 95 percent of AU graduates are satisfied with the quality of their AU education, and more than 95 percent of our graduates would recommend AU to others.

AU is committed to continuously improving the learning environment. A supportive learning environment and varied teaching and learning activities all have in common the ability to engage students, promote effective learning, and help students to respond successfully to the challenges of local, national and international communities, whether these are academic, social or cultural. At AU, we recognize our role in strengthening and contributing to a relevant, resilient, and viable economy. Our mandate to remove the educational, geographical, financial, social, and cultural barriers that often limit access to post-secondary achievement guarantees access to university-level study for a broad range of learners who would otherwise not have the opportunity to pursue university studies. Over 600 college graduates per year seek to upgrade their professional qualifications through AU, and over 6,100 students from other Alberta post-secondary institutions take AU courses for transfer to their home institutions. We provide the credentials that help prepare individuals for a wide variety of professional opportunities.

Regular comprehensive program reviews consistently confirm that AU's programs meet the highest standards of education and practice. In addition, provincial, national, and international professional and regulatory bodies approve and accredit several AU professional programs that lead to certification or licensure. The focus on pursuing and maintaining accreditation and approval continues across the University.

Quality assurance and continuous improvement are also supported by the implementation of AU's *Focused on the Future of Learning: Educational Review 2015-2016 Report*. Informed by faculty strategic plans and extensive consultation and engagement, the *Educational Review* offered 31 recommendations and a set of commitments to future actions to support the ongoing rejuvenation,

renewal, and re-alignment of the University’s academic profile. The University community is fully engaged in implementing the recommendations over the next two years; improvements to programs and learning environments are already evident and implementation of processes that support accountability and efficiency, reduce duplication, and place greater emphasis on the alignment between assessment and outcomes are under way. This important work will inform the creation of AU’s *Master Plan*.

AU continues to contribute, through research, to broadening knowledge in multiple disciplines. In keeping with the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review*, re-envisioning the University’s *Strategic Research Plan* is a priority. As part of the strategic planning process, we will explore the feasibility of establishing a Northern Alberta Research Unit focused on the environmental, social, economic, cultural, and political realities of northern Alberta.

Additionally, AU is focused on implementing the nearly completed *Student Service Plan 2017-2020*. The plan focuses on supporting student success by encouraging student progression and facilitating a strong student experience. Guided by the principles of flexibility, accessibility, transparency, quality and consistency, sustainability, and engagement and community, the plan makes 32 recommendations that will 1) support an engaging and interactive student experience, 2) support access and inclusion, 3) support student wellbeing, 4) support the AU community in serving students, 5) cultivate a culture of student service, and 6) strengthen the student service operation. Implementation of the Plan will support the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review* as the plan will improve and integrate student services and processes to ensure that all learners’ experiences are consistent with the promise expressed in AU’s mission.

We have also implemented a strategic and integrated approach to enrolment management to enhance student engagement and success. We are refocusing our attention on improving student retention by reducing the barriers students encounter in their learning journey and better supporting their academic success and continuous progress toward timely course and program completion.

### Quality Goals, Priority Initiatives, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

<b>Goal 1: PROVIDE A QUALITY INTERACTIVE AND ENGAGING STUDENT EXPERIENCE.</b>			
<b>Priority Initiatives</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
<b>(P1)</b> A renewed focus on leadership in student services through the implementation of the Student Service Plan	<b>(EO1)</b> Increased student progression.	<b>(PM1)</b> Percentage of applicants who enrol in first course  <b>(PM2)</b> Percentage of students who complete first assignment	March 2018, then ongoing

	<b>(PM3)</b> Percentage of program students who re-register	
<b>(E02)</b> Increased or stable student experience.	<b>(PM4)</b> Average time to completion	As above
	<b>(PM1)</b> Percentage of students who report that they are Very Satisfied with student experience	
	<b>(PM2)</b> National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Quality of Interaction Rating	
	<b>(PM3)</b> NSSE Supportive Environment Rating	
	<b>(PM4)</b> Number of students who would recommend AU	

**Goal 2: CULTIVATE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE BY BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY IN STRATEGIC AREAS.**

Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
<b>(P1)</b> Refine <i>Strategic Research Plan</i> to enable growth of AU's research in alignment with its mandate.	<b>(EO1)</b> Growth in research activity, output, and impact in strategically relevant areas of focus.	<b>(PM1)</b> <i>Strategic Research Plan</i> complete.	1 February 2018
		<b>(PM2)</b> Scholarly publications.	Ongoing; revenue to be reported annually
<b>(P2)</b> Enhance research capacity	<b>(EO1)</b> Increased grant submissions and success.	<b>(PM1)</b> Research revenue from tri-agency, industry, and community sources.	Ongoing; revenue to be reported annually

	<b>(E02)</b> Recruitment to vacant research chair positions.	<b>(PM2)</b> Percentage of research revenue from tri-agency sources.	
<b>(P3)</b> Foster high-quality personnel (HQP) training	<b>(E01)</b> Increased research training for students and postdoctoral fellows.	<b>(PM1)</b> Number of student research assistants and postdoctoral fellows.	Ongoing; number to be reported annually

## AFFORDABILITY

AU has developed a national and international reputation for delivering affordable courses and programs designed specifically for learners who seek flexible, authentic, relevant, and meaningful learning.

Over the past year, AU has implemented several initiatives to further support affordability. For example, as part of our ongoing work to increase access, Virtual Examination Invigilation has been piloted to provide students with the ability to write examinations wherever they have a suitable Internet connection. The pilot initiative has significantly reduced costs associated with writing examinations for both students and the University and has been evaluated for permanent adoption.

At AU, we take every opportunity to celebrate and reward success. Our student awards and bursaries celebrate academic excellence and allow students to balance academics with family, career, and community roles. Nearly 120 awards are available. The University is currently enhancing the student awards application system to ensure a more robust and efficient Student Awards Program. We continue to seek out additional investment in support of student awards for all Alberta learners, including part-time students.

Students have also benefited from AU’s leadership role in the Campus Alberta Open Educational Resources (OER) Initiative, which has contributed to a sustainable foundation for the assembly, development, use, and assessment of OER across Alberta and beyond. OER have the potential to significantly reduce costs for students enrolled at all post-secondary institutions, and AU is leading the way through research and development, as well as adoption and reuse of OER. In the coming months, the University plans to host the Campus Alberta Open Educational Resources (ABOER) Initiative repository and support the Alberta OER Community of Practice. AU faculty members are committed to continuing to create OER and related analytic tools in support of creativity and excellence in teaching and learning.

AU is dedicated to ensuring that students benefit from the savings generated through the adoption of OER and that learning resources are student-centered, accessible, and fairly priced. As a result, a comprehensive review of our learning resources systems is under way to identify new models for the future. The review will ensure that the provision of learning resources supports achievement of the strategic objectives set out in the AU *Master Plan* and that learning resources are managed to ensure that all students are appropriately supported in their learning journeys.

## Affordability Goals, Priority Initiatives, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

### Goal 1: DIVERSIFY THE PROVISION OF LEARNING RESOURCES.

Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
<b>(P1)</b> Provide learning resources to ensure that all students are appropriately supported in their learning journeys.	<b>(EO1)</b> A student-centered, accessible, accountable, and fairly priced framework for the provision of learning resources.	<b>(PM1)</b> Sell-through % at MyAU bookstore.	2018

### Goal 2: REDUCE FINANCIAL BARRIERS FOR STUDENTS.

Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
<b>(P1)</b> Additional investment in student awards for all Alberta learners, including part-time students.	<b>(EO1)</b> Increase awareness of availability of student awards.	<b>(PM1)</b> Value of student awards.	Ongoing
	<b>(EO2)</b> Increase total number and value of awards available to students.	<b>(PM2)</b> Number of awards given.	

## COORDINATION

Athabasca University is continuing to work closely with Alberta colleges and technical institutes to provide pathways for degree completion and to create educational linkages of value to students. Partnerships with a wide range of industry employers, associations, and sports organizations promote higher learning and enable members and employees of these diverse organizations to achieve higher education goals.

Grouped-study partnerships between AU and a number of Alberta colleges, as well as one in the Northwest Territories, create post-secondary laddering opportunities and pathways to degree completion for learners in smaller centres, who benefit from being able to remain in their home community while completing their post-secondary education. Students can complete AU courses at the partner locations, such as Aurora College, Bow Valley College, Grande Prairie Regional College, and Lethbridge College. Over 1,000 students registered for grouped-study courses in 2016-17. AU is exploring opportunities to redefine some grouped-study relationships and has developed new partnership agreements with Lakeland College and Medicine Hat College to support articulated pathways to degree completion.

AU continues to participate in the Western Canadian Deans of Graduate Studies (WCDGS) Agreement. The agreement promotes the effective pursuit of graduate studies at western Canadian universities. Under the agreement, graduate students can take courses required for a degree program that are not available at their home institution at another western Canadian university. Our involvement in the agreement has resulted in the enrichment of graduate programs throughout western Canada.

AU supports and champions the principle of coordination through our leadership role in the Canadian Virtual University–Université virtuelle canadienne consortium (CVU-UVC), an association of Canadian universities committed to providing high-quality online distance education. CVU-UVC universities collectively offer over 2,000 courses and 400 programs that students can easily search from a single website. In 2016, registrations in online degree courses exceeded 246,000 at the 11 Canadian universities belonging to CVU-UVC. Registrations have doubled since 2000 and we anticipate continued growth.

Our focus for the coming year is to nurture existing partnerships and establish new industry relationships. In keeping with the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review*, we commit to exploring strategies for AU to capitalize on under-developed opportunities as a result of our geographic location in northern Alberta.

As our *Capital Plan* outlines, AU is also well positioned to deploy shared data centre services and cloud expertise to the northern Alberta public sector. This initiative would result in a shared service environment where all participants share costs equally and equitably.

### Coordination Goals, Priority Initiatives, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

Goal 1: LEVERAGE AU’s LOCATION IN ATHABASCA.			
Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
(P1) Capitalize on under-developed opportunities created by AU’s location in Athabasca.	(E01) Alignment between AU’s current mission and mandate and the opportunities presented by being located in northern Alberta.	(PM1) Completion of a strategy and facility study regarding the connection of AU to the Town and County of Athabasca.	May 1, 2018
	(E02) Maintain or expand the size of AU’s operations in the Town of Athabasca and in northern Alberta.		

## ACCOUNTABILITY

AU has launched an extensive effort to envision its goals for the next five years and to re-imagine our mission, vision, values, and aspirations for our shared work ahead. The *AU Master Plan*, currently in development, will be instrumental in moving the University forward to a new level of excellence in service to our students and to the people of Alberta.

AU has recently adopted the provostial model, which will have significant benefits to the University. The Provost will lead long-term planning and priority-setting decisions, and will work in partnership with the University community to ensure that resources and budgetary plans are in line with institutional priorities.

AU is committed to demonstrating accountability, and has recognized the importance of integrated planning and priority-setting. In recent months, we have completed an analysis of the University's project portfolio. The analysis is assisting us in identifying, prioritizing, and delivering on key initiatives in a timely manner.

In support of a strategic approach to planning, AU's priority for the year to come is to implement an integrated planning framework to improve our planning processes and coordinate our strategic planning efforts. Through integrated planning, we will adopt a more collaborative and systematic framework to encourage better planning and execution at all levels across the institution. The framework will support strategic planning, multi-year budgeting, and performance monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

The University also continues to implement Responsibility Centered Management (RCM) to ensure that AU's budget evolves in a way that makes our operations more fiscally sustainable. Implementation of RCM is occurring in stages with a view to being complete in 2019.

### Accountability Goals, Priority Initiatives, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

Goal 1: COMPLETE COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR REVITALIZATION AND GROWTH.			
Priority Initiatives	Expected Outcomes	Performance Measures	Expected Completion
(P1) <i>AU Master Plan</i>	(E01) A re-imagined AU.	(PM1) Revised mandate and vision statement.	September 1, 2017
	(E02) Set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, and improve organizational performance.	(PM2) Completed <i>AU Master Plan</i> .	November 1, 2017

**Goal 2: ALIGN FINANCIAL AND CAPITAL RESOURCES WITH ACADEMIC PRIORITIES.**

<b>Priority Initiatives</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
<b>(P1)</b> Integrated planning framework across the institution.	<b>(E01)</b> Alignment of financial and capital resources with academic priorities.	<b>(PM1)</b> Institutional planning aligned.	September 2018
	<b>(E01)</b> RCM implemented for business planning and budgeting.	<b>(PM1)</b> Progress on RCM implementation.	2019

## Appendix A: Financial and Budget Information

### Overview

Athabasca University is committed to long term sustainability. The following budget plan retains a commitment to the mission of the University while formulating appropriate strategies regarding the available resources in a financially challenging environment. All budget strategies have been developed in light of the vision and five Alberta Adult Learning System Principles: quality, access, affordability, accountability, and coordination.

The proposed budget is for the 2017-18 fiscal year, representing the period April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018.

The budget submitted represents a balanced position for on-going operations with surplus budgets anticipated for the following two years. These surplus results, however, are projections based on budget mitigation strategies being taken by the University to adjust its operational effectiveness as well as restructuring. In the long term, a number of these strategies are not sustainable and will need to be adjusted.

Given the current state of AU's financial challenges, efforts were undertaken to consider all possible budget strategies to achieve a balanced operational budget for the 2017/2018 year. Through collaboration within the AU community, strategic and tactical lenses were applied to the 2017-18 budget and related opportunities to achieve lasting sustainability. In some cases, budget decisions represent structural changes that will have ongoing and lasting implications for AU. These changes represent foundational decisions that will enable a future reset for AU. In other cases, decisions represent refinements of processes and efficiencies. In all cases, however, decisions were made such that they would align and complement the recommendations made by the Third Party and the future needs of the University.

While this budget marks a significant improvement over the 2016-17 budget that had an operating deficit of \$3.3 million, failure to implement the 2017-18 budget strategies will result in an accumulated deficit by the end of 2017-18. Recognizing the risk of the failure to achieve the savings, administration has put in place mitigation and accountability measures.

Going forward, operating surpluses of \$6.1 million and \$6.8 million for 2018-19 and 2019-20 respectively are projected. However, outside of the three percent targeted registration growth, these projected surpluses do not take into account further potential financial benefits that may arise from the initiatives implemented from the third-party review and assume a relatively stable operational budget. Based on the extensive planning that will take place this coming year, significant adaptations should be expected for the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 budget cycles.

If the budget strategies from the 2016-17 year and the 2017-18 year are not implemented successfully or reversed, then AU will face an operating deficit of up to \$12.3 million for 2017-18 and projected operating deficits of \$12.9 million and \$13.1 million for 2018-19 and 2019-20 respectively. Correspondingly, the accumulated surplus from operations, excluding the \$17.7 million pension liability, would decrease from \$12.1 million at the end of March 2017 to an accumulated deficit of

\$30.2 million at the end of March 2020.

### **Implementation of the *Independent Third-Party Review***

Athabasca University is also submitting a budget that incorporates the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review* (June 2017) which have been accepted by the Board of Governors and the Ministry of Advanced Education. The report states “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. 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.”

As a result, to complement the balanced submission, AU is also seeking an additional investment of \$6.2 million in 2017-18 to successfully address and implement the recommendations and directions of the *Independent Third-Party Review* and overall planning process for the University. Following the planning processes identified in the *Third-Party Review*, significant adaptation should be anticipated into years 2 and 3 of the budgeting process based on the potential financial and social benefits stemming from the investment.

The primary challenge facing AU is the urgency of the tasks to implement the recommendations of the third-party review in light of the overall master planning process for the University. Unless significant changes are made soon, AU will continue to face a financial environment in which expenses are expected to be beyond the revenues. While the University was able to mitigate this impact during the 2016-17 and the 2017-18 year, this financial reality remains present for the foreseeable future.

### **Background**

Over the last 31 years, the proportion of government funding in AU’s budget has decreased from approximately 82 to 36 per cent of its revenue. This level of funding is very low compared to that of other Alberta post-secondary institutions. As a percentage of operating budget, the grant per Full Learner Equivalent (FLE) to Athabasca University is lower than that of all other public post-secondary institutions and lower than two of the independent post-secondary institutions in Alberta. As a result, AU is disadvantaged by the absence of provincial policy changes to address the current inequitable funding framework. Over the same period, AU’s reliance on student tuition, fees and other own sources of revenue has increased from approximately 18 percent to 64 percent. AU cannot, however, increase tuition or other mandatory student fees as they are regulated by the provincial government. As such, AU is constrained by tuition and fee regulations. In the past 10 years, AU’s reserves have fallen from \$29.2 million to 12.1 million, excluding the \$17.7 million pension liability.

### **Challenges**

In addition to the challenges noted above, AU is experiencing and will continue to experience significant fiscal challenges as a result of the following.

- AU is facing increasing competition from other post-secondary providers provincially, nationally and internationally.
- The province has imposed a moratorium on new programs at AU, further constraining revenue generating opportunities.
- AU has limited opportunities to increase revenue through ancillary fees.
- The effects of merit and cost of living allowance increases compound over time.
- 83 percent of AU's operating expenses (67 percent salaries and benefits and 16 percent non-salary expenses) are uncontrollable in the short term.

### **Three-Year Budget Assumptions and Financial Sensitivity Analysis (Schedules 1A and 1B)**

The following assumptions underlie the Three Year 2017-2020 budget projections:

- 2.0 percent increase in Campus Alberta base operating grant in 2017-18 and no increase the following two years.
- Provincial Infrastructure Maintenance Program funding will remain unchanged.
- Undergraduate and graduate course registration will increase by 1.0 percent in 2017-18 and 3.0 percent in each of the following two years. This is the targeted growth rate based on the implementation of the recommendations from the Third-Party Review.
- In-province tuition fees will remain frozen at 2014-15 levels for 2017-18 and in each of the following two years.
- Out-of-province tuition fees will increase 4.0 percent in 2017-18 and in each of the following two years.
- The average annual merit increase will be 2.3 percent for 2017-18 and for each of the following two years.
- No Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) or merit increase for excluded staff due to provincial freeze for two years effective the 2016-17 fiscal year.
- Inflation on the cost of course materials will average 4.0 percent annually.
- Inflation on all other expenses will average 2.0 percent annually.
- Foreign exchange on US purchases is projected at 35 percent (non-compounding).

Athabasca University  
2017-2018 Proposed Budget

**Schedule 1A: Budget Assumptions**  
(Percentages)

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	<b>Budget</b>			
<b>Revenue:</b>				
Government of Alberta base grant	2%	<b>2%</b>	0%	0%
Undergraduate registration growth	1.3%	<b>1%</b>	3%*	3%*
Graduate registration growth	0%	<b>0%</b>	3%*	3%*
In province tuition fees increase	0%	<b>0%</b>	0%	0%
Out of province fee increase	1.6%	<b>4%</b>	4%	4%
<b>Expense:</b>				
Average merit on salaries & benefits	2.6%	<b>2.3%</b>	2.3%	2.3%
Inflation on paper texts	4%	<b>4%</b>	4%	4%
Inflation on e-texts	4.6%	<b>4%</b>	4%	4%
Inflation - general	2%	<b>2%</b>	2%	2%
Foreign exchange (non-compounding)	30%	<b>35%</b>	35%	35%

\* Targeting growth rate based on implementation of recommendations of Third-Party Review

Schedule 1B provides the financial sensitivity analysis in relation to percentage changes in both revenue and expense components.

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-18 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 1B: Sensitivity Analysis**  
*(Thousands)*

<b>Component</b>	<b>Percentage Change (plus or minus)</b>		
	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<u>Revenue:</u>			
Campus Alberta Provincial Grant	\$ 416	\$ 1,248	\$ 2,080
Undergraduate Tuition and student fees	500	1,500	2,500
Graduate Tuition and student fees	200	600	1,000
Learning resources fee	161	483	805
Investment income	12	36	60
<u>Expense</u>			
Salary and benefits	\$ 940	\$ 2,820	\$ 4,700
Other expenses	443	1,329	2,215
<u>Undergraduate Enrolment:</u>			
Undergraduate student fees	\$ 500	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,500
Tutorial volume (Salaries and benefits)	149	447	745
Net	\$ 351	\$ 1,053	\$ 1,755

## **APPROACH**

### **Budget Process**

The budgeting process began in early November 2016 with the President holding all staff budget meetings at AU's four locations. The Financial Services Department followed up with a budget workshop for all budget holders. To ensure the 2017-18 budget process was inclusive, the Budget Committee, not held in the previous budget year, was reinstated with representatives from across AU. Two Budget Committee meetings were held in mid-January 2017 and Deans, for the first time, were included as advisors to the Budget Committee. The President also held a separate strategy session with the Deans in early February 2017. Three consultation meetings with the executive bodies of the undergraduate and graduate student unions were also held. Utilizing information and recommendations gathered through these consultation meetings, the Executive Group developed an overall budget for the University.

## Opening Budget Position

The proposed budget for 2017-18 is based on the 2016-17 approved budget, adjusted for revenue growth and significant cost pressures. Adding in the new requests for 2017-18 resulted in an opening projected deficit of \$12.3 million for 2017-18, as shown in Schedule 2 below. Through collaboration with the AU community and incorporation of the strategic and tactical budget strategies identified, AU was able to eliminate this projected deficit for 2017-18.

<b>Athabasca University 2017-2018 Budget Schedule 2</b>	
Starting Point From Last Year: 2016-17 Budget Deficit	\$ (3,254,248)
Strategies from last year remain ( <i>Vacant position savings, revenue and expense growth</i> )	(5,129,550)
Adjusted 2017-2018 Opening Budget Before New Requests	\$ (8,383,798)
New Requests	\$ (3,909,751)
<b>TOTAL 2017-18 OPENING BUDGET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) ESTIMATE</b>	<b>(12,293,549)</b>
<i>(If no budget strategies implemented)</i>	

## Budget Strategies

Budget strategies at the strategic level focused on re-imagining the future of AU, resetting current approaches, and seizing new opportunities, all with the aim of building a sustainable future, within the context of a measured approach to new opportunities and new requests. Budget strategies at the tactical level addressed opportunities related to human capital, academic and operational restructuring, enhancing administrative and operational efficiencies and new and improved revenue sources.

## Risks

- AU is facing financial challenges, so it is imperative that budget strategies are implemented.
- AU is reliant on the implementation of a series of time sensitive budget strategies that if missed will fail to create the necessary revenues or reduce the necessary costs to meet the 2017-18 budget.
- AU continues to rely heavily on a vacancy savings. The 2017-18 target of \$4.6 million is the equivalent of about 46 full-time positions. While these savings are essential to realize a balanced budget for operations for 2017-18, this practice is not sustainable as it places additional workload on existing employees and affects the delivery of effective student services.
- The provincial freeze on non-union employee salary and merit increases raises the issue of pay equity and negative impacts on employee morale.
- If the strategies are not implemented as planned, AU will face a budget shortfall of \$12.3 million and will be in an accumulated deficit position of \$1.4 million (excluding the \$17.7 million pension liability; \$19.1 million (including the \$17.7 million pension liability) by the end of the 2017-18 fiscal year.

## Mitigation Strategies

An approach focused on accountability will be undertaken by budget holders and the Executive Group to ensure the proposed budget strategies are implemented. To this end:

- Executives will ensure all budget saving strategies are achieved and advise the Executive Group of unavoidable circumstances.
- Budget holders will exercise close scrutiny of expenditures to ensure they align with AU mission.
- Units reporting over expenditures must fund those expenditures from their unit budget and provide a mitigation plan.
- Budget holders will monitor budgets on a monthly basis.
- Executives and Executive Group will closely scrutinize staffing requests.
- Executives and managers will ensure vacations are utilized to foster greater work-life balance and reduce vacation liability.
- On-going communication with the Ministry of Advanced Education.

## Accountability

All levels of management will be held accountable for meeting financial targets. There will be an accountability framework integrated into AU's variance and forecast reports. Budget owners will be responsible for variances, mitigation strategies, and solutions within the 2017-18 budget year.

## 2017-18 BUDGET DETAILS

### Revenues

All revenue sources have been reviewed with an eye to retaining AU's market share in an increasingly competitive environment. In recent years, registration of Ontario students at AU has declined while registrations from Alberta and other provinces have grown.

Student fee revenues have been increased based on a projected increase in undergraduate registration of 1.0 percent and a 4.0 percent increase to out-of-province and non-mandatory fees in 2017-18. Graduate registration is not expected to grow or decline in 2017-18. All of AU's graduate programs are subject to the tuition freeze.

The area with the greatest potential for revenue generation is the implementation of the MyAU Bookstore, which will deliver choice to learners in the provision of their learning resources. Strategies for implementing MyAU Bookstore and covering the textbook costs are currently being evaluated with the potential budget savings slated to begin in January 2018, the last three months of the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Overall, students are expected to register for 79,805 courses in 2017-18 (Schedule 3).

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-2018 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 3: Registration Growth**

	Actual <u>2015-16</u>	Actual <u>2016-17</u>	Proposed Budget <u>2017-18</u>	Projection* <u>2018-19</u>	Projection* <u>2019-20</u>
<b><u>Registration growth</u></b>					
Undergraduate **					
Alberta	0.5%	4.6%	1.0%	3%***	3%***
Out of Province	0.0%	(1.3%)	1.0%	3%***	3%***
Total Undergraduate	0.3%	3.2%	1.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Graduate	7.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3%***	3%***
Total registration growth	1.2%	3.4%	0.9%	3.0%	1.7%
<b><u>Registration numbers</u></b>					
Undergraduate **					
Alberta	28,971	34,519	34,864	35,918	36,457
Out of Province	37,117	34,158	34,500	35,542	36,075
Total Undergraduate	66,088	68,677	69,364	71,460	72,532
Graduate	10,396	10,441	10,441	10,754	11,077
Total registrations	76,484	79,118	79,805	82,214	83,609

\* Estimates in these years are preliminary and will be refined in future year budgets

\*\* Undergraduate registrations do not include challenge exams and group study

\*\*\* Targeting growth rate based on implementation of recommendations of Third-Party Review

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-2018 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 4A: Statement of Operations**  
**(Not for Profit Accounting Standards Format - by Expense Categories)**  
(Thousands of \$)

	<b>Proposed</b>		
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Projection</b>
	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Government of Alberta grants <sup>(1)</sup>	\$ 45,488	44,746	44,746
Tuition and other student fees	70,026	72,788	74,829
Sales of goods and services	17,491	22,672	23,151
Federal and other government grants <sup>(1)</sup>	1,515	1,571	1,586
Investment income	1,285	1,200	1,200
Donations and other grants <sup>(1)</sup>	597	570	519
Endowment contributions	-	-	-
Amortization of deferred capital contributions <sup>(1)</sup>	3,288	3,312	3,409
	<b>139,690</b>	<b>146,859</b>	<b>149,440</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
Salaries	78,146	78,443	79,799
Employee benefits	15,943	16,595	16,959
Fees and purchased services	20,278	19,535	19,716
Materials and supplies	12,070	12,539	12,966
Communications and Travel	2,869	3,261	3,283
Rent, insurance and utilities	2,773	2,546	2,546
Amortization expense	6,318	6,542	6,116
Scholarships and bursaries	1,293	1,293	1,293
	<b>139,690</b>	<b>140,754</b>	<b>142,678</b>
<b>Surplus(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,105</b>	<b>\$ 6,762</b>

(1) Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions by funding source

Government of Alberta grants	\$ 3,042	\$ 3,090	\$ 3,198
Federal and other government grants	236	219	210
Other grants	10	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,288</b>	<b>\$ 3,312</b>	<b>\$ 3,409</b>

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-2018 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 4B: Statement of Operations**  
**(Public Sector Accounting Standards Format - by Function)**  
(Thousands of \$)

	<b>Proposed Budget 2017-18</b>	<b>Projection 2018-19</b>	<b>Projection 2019-20</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Government of Alberta grants <sup>(1)</sup>	\$ 45,488	\$ 44,746	\$ 44,746
Tuition and other student fees	70,026	72,788	74,829
Sales of goods and services	17,491	22,672	23,151
Federal and other government grants <sup>(1)</sup>	1,515	1,571	1,586
Investment income	1,285	1,200	1,200
Donations and other grants <sup>(1)</sup>	597	570	519
Endowment contributions	-	-	-
Amortization of deferred capital contributions <sup>(1)</sup>	3,288	3,312	3,409
	<b>139,690</b>	<b>146,859</b>	<b>149,440</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Instruction and Non Sponsored Research	77,016	77,614	78,674
Academic & Student Support	17,300	17,435	17,673
Institutional Support	14,137	14,226	14,421
Computing and Communication	10,447	10,528	10,672
Ancillary Services	8,215	8,279	8,392
Sponsored Research & special purpose	7,462	7,520	7,623
Facility Operations and maintenance	5,113	5,152	5,223
	<b>139,690</b>	<b>140,754</b>	<b>142,678</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expense</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,105</b>	<b>\$ 6,762</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions by funding source

Government of Alberta grants	\$ 3,042	\$ 3,090	\$ 3,198
Federal and other government grants	236	219	210
Other grants	10	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,288</b>	<b>\$ 3,312</b>	<b>\$ 3,409</b>

Revenue of \$139 million is expected for 2017-18. Tuition and mandatory student fees for Alberta students will continue to be frozen at 2014-15 levels.

The out-of-province tuition fee for a three-credit undergraduate course will increase to \$153 (from \$129). This fee adjustment ensures that the total of base tuition and the out-of-province fee goes up by an inflation rate of 4%. Out-of-country fees will increase to \$957 (from \$352) with the result that the total per course tuition for an out-of-country student will increase to \$1,574 (from \$1,014), except in the case of currently enrolled international program students who will receive a tuition increase of 10% (\$352 to \$387).

The undergraduate learning resource fee will be reduced from \$180 to \$130, reflecting the split of third party resources from the learning resource fee. The cost of textbooks and e-texts will now be borne by the students and will be outside of the learning resource fee. While this change will provide students with greater choice in purchasing their learning resources, be it through different vendors or purchasing used versus new learning resources, the overall cost to the student may exceed the savings in the learning resource fee depending on the specific courses enrolled in. Other than minor inflationary increases to non-mandatory student fees, no other fee increases are planned for 2017-18.

The tuition and other fee changes are outlined in Schedules 5A to 5E. All non-mandatory student fee increases, which are based on the year-over-year change in the Alberta Consumer Price Index, have been discussed with representatives of the Athabasca University Students' Union and the Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association. All fee changes will take effect on September 1, 2017.

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-2018 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 5A: Tuition & Related Fee Projections**

	2016-17 Actual	<b>2017-18 Proposed*</b>	2018-19 Projected**	2019-2020 Projected**
<b>Course-Based Fees</b>				
<u>Undergraduate Student Fees</u>				
Course fee (3-credit)	\$ 476	\$ 476	\$ 476	\$ 476
Percentage change	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<u>Graduate Student Fees</u>				
Master of Education in Distance Education				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160
Master of Health Studies and Master of Nursing				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 75	\$ 75	\$ 75	\$ 75
Master of Arts Integrated Studies				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160
Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Architecture				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160
Master of Science				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160
Graduate Diploma Heritage Resources Management				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160
Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Legislative Drafting				
Course fee	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 160
<b>Program-Based Fees</b>				
<u>Graduate Student Fees</u>				
Master of Business Administration				
Program tuition	\$ 35,140	\$ 35,140	\$ 35,140	\$ 35,140
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 9,444	\$ 9,444	\$ 9,444	\$ 9,444
Master of Counselling				
Program tuition	\$ 22,890	\$ 22,890	\$ 22,890	\$ 22,890
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 900	\$ 900	\$ 900	\$ 900
Doctor of Business Administration				
Program tuition	\$ 48,350	\$ 48,350	\$ 48,350	\$ 48,350
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 5,250	\$ 5,250	\$ 5,250	\$ 5,250
Doctor of Education in Distance Education				
Program tuition	\$ 43,210	\$ 43,210	\$ 43,210	\$ 43,210
Learning Resource Fee	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,650

\* Tuition Fees for Courses and Program are frozen at 2014-2015 levels for FY2016 FY2017 and FY2018

\*\* The fee changes are preliminary and will be refined in future year budgets

**Athabasca University  
2017-2018 Budget  
Schedule 5B: Undergraduate Regular Tuition Fee**

Regular tuition fee refers to the amount commonly quoted to students (displayed in the calendar as 'regular'). This includes base tuition, learning resources fee, students' union fee, alumni fee & out of province or out of country fee, if applicable.

**Maximum tuition increase : example 3-credit course effective January 1, 2018**

	Student living in Alberta	Student living in Canada, outside of Alberta	International student living outside Canada
<b>Budget 2017-2018</b>			
Base Tuition	\$ 476	476	476
Learning Resources	130	130	130
Students' Union	9	9	9
AU Alumni	2	2	2
	<u>\$ 617</u>	<u>617</u>	<u>617</u>
Out of Province, In Canada	-	153	-
Out of Canada, International	-	-	957
	<u>\$ 617</u>	<u>770</u>	<u>1,574</u>
<b>Actual 2016-2017</b>	667	794	1,014
<b>Change: Budgeted fee less current</b>	<u>\$ (50)</u>	<u>(24)</u>	<u>560</u>

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-2018 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 5C: Undergraduate Tuition and Related Fees**

	Actual 13-14	Actual 14-15	Actual 15-16	Actual 16-17	Budget 2017-2018	change
<b>Course Fees</b>						
Course - 3 credit - Alberta	472	476	476	476	476	-
4 credit - Canadian	629	635	635	635	635	-
6 credit - Canadian	944	952	952	952	952	-
9 credit - Canadian	1,416	1,428	1,428	1,428	1,428	-
Out of Province Fee	114	127	127	129	153	24
Out of Country Fee	334	347	347	352	957	605
Out of Country Fee Existing Program Students	334	347	347	352	387	35
Extension Fee	165	165	165	167	174	7
Learning Resources Fee	180	180	180	180	130	(50) *
<b>Other Fees</b>						
Application (initial) + Transcript Fee	115	115	115	115	115	-
Challenge for Credit Fee						
3 or 4 credit - Canadian	354	357	357	357	357	-
6 credit - Canadian	708	714	714	714	714	-
Clinical Fee - Post LPN to BN (per credit)		50	50	50	50	-
Courier Recovery Fee	20% margin	20% margin	20% margin	20% margin	20% margin	
E-Letter Print Fee (one-time)	10	10	10	10	10	-
<b>Examination Fees</b>						
Exam Rebooking Fee	100	100	100	102	106	4
Late Exam Request Fee	100	100	100	102	106	4
Multiple Exam Fee	50	50	50	51	53	2
Refund for Lost Exams	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)	-
Supplemental Exam Fee	150	150	150	153	159	6
Evaluation Fee	100	100	100	102	106	4
<b>Laboratory Fees</b>						
Laboratory Course Fee - Canadian	300	300	300	300	300	-
Laboratory - Kit Fee	50	50	50	50	50	-
Laboratory - On Site Fee	50	50	50	50	50	-
Laboratory - Virtual on-line			50	50	50	-
Parchment Replacement Fee	60	60	60	60	60	-
<b>Prior Learning Assess &amp; Recognition</b>						
Assessment Fee	750	750	750	761	791	30
Withdrawal Fee	250	250	250	250	250	-
Extension Fee	250	250	250	250	250	-
Transcript Priority Fee	50	50	50	51	53	2
Transcript Regular Fee (per copy)	0	0	0	0	-	-
Withdrawal Processing Fee	150	150	150	152	158	6
English Language Assess (Write Site ELA Plus)	90	90	90	90	90	-
<b>International Collaborations</b>						
English Writing Skills Test	50	50	50	51	53	2
Course Fee 3 credit (student pays partner)			\$140 to \$250	Ave \$170		
Partner Fee (partner pays AU)			35% course fees			NC
Maximum fee increases over four years			5% max annual increase			
<b>NON AU fees: AU Students' Union Fees (collected on AUSU behalf)</b>						
Amount per course credit (e.g. 3 credit is \$9)	3	3	3	3	3	-

\* Learning Resource Fee decrease effective January 1, 2018

**Athabasca University**  
**2017-2018 Proposed Budget**  
**Schedule 5D (Page 1): Graduate Student Fees**

Fee description	MBA			DBA			EdD			MCP			MEd		
	16-17	Sep 1/17 <sup>(1)</sup>	change	16-17	Sep 1/17 <sup>(1)</sup>	change	16-17	Sep 1/17 <sup>(1)</sup>	change	16-17	Sep 1/17 <sup>(1)</sup>	change	16-17	Sep 1/17 <sup>(1)</sup>	change
<b>Program based fees</b>															
Tuition															
Phase 1	\$ 14,040	14,040	-	10,500	10,500	-	8,420	8,420	-	16,200	16,200	-			
Phase 2	20,100	20,100	-	10,500	10,500	-	8,420	8,420	-			-			
Phase 3			-	3,500	3,500	-	8,420	8,420	-			-			
<b>Learning resource fee</b>															
Phase 1	3,546	3,546	-	2,250	2,250	-	550	550	-	900	900	-			
change effect January 1, 2018	5,898	5,898	-	2,250	2,250	-	550	550	-			-			
Phase 2			-			-			-			-			
Phase 3			-	750	750	-	550	550	-			-			
Candidacy Exam															
Dissertation fee				5,410	5,410	-									
Program fees			-	17,440	17,440	-	17,800	17,800	-	6,340	6,340	-			-
Program application fee	200	200	-	200	200	-	150	150	-	150	150	-	150	150	-
Program admission fee	800	800	-	800	800	-			-	200	200	-	200	200	-
Total program fee <sup>(2)</sup>	44,584	44,584	-	53,600	53,600	-	44,860	44,860	-	23,790	23,790	-			
<b>Course based fees</b>															
Tuition										1,350	1,350	-	1,350	1,350	-
<b>Learning resource fee :</b>										75	75	-	160	160	-
Total students living in Canada (a)										1,425	1,425	-	1,510	1,510	-
International shipping/differential fee (b)	400	400	-	400	400	-	n/a	n/a	-	200	200	-	200	200	-
Total students living outside Canada (a+b)										1,625	1,625	-	1,710	1,710	-
AU Graduate Student															
Association Fee: per credit	13	13	-	13	13	-	13	13	-	13	13	-	13	13	-
Exchange Fee <sup>(3)</sup>															
(Western Deans Agreement)															
Thesis / Project / Practicum	Applied Project fee included in Phase 3, no additional amount									Project included in the program fee, no additional amount			Thesis option fee = same as four courses		
<b>Continuation fee</b>	508	518	10	equal to program fee			equal to program fee			covered by program fee			equal to course tuition fee		
Comprehensive exam fee (repeats)	250	250	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	250	250	-
<b>Course extension fee</b>	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	254	259	5	254	259	5	254	259	5
<b>Letter of permission fee</b>	75	77	2	76	78	2	76	78	2	76	78	2	76	78	2
Non-program application fee	200	200	-	200	200	-	100	100	-	100	100	-	100	100	-
Nurs518 Laboratory fee	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-
Nurs530 [BC NP Students] fee	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-
HERM670 Onsite fee <sup>(4)</sup>	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-
HERM671 Onsite fee <sup>(4)</sup>	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-
<b>Program transfer fee</b>	102	104	2	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-
Supplemental examination fee	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-
<b>Transfer credit evaluation fee</b>	254	259	5	254	259	5	254	259	5	254	259	5	254	259	5
Withdrawal processing fee	350	350	-	350	350	-	350	350	-	350	350	-	350	350	-

<sup>(1)</sup> All fee changes are effective September 1, 2017; except for Learning Resource Fee effective January 1, 2018.

<sup>(2)</sup> Program tuition fees are quoted for MBA, DBA, EdD and MCP. For official fees for all other programs refer to quoted "Tuition base per course".

<sup>(3)</sup> To take a graduate course at another participating university, an AU graduate program student pays AU regular tuition for an equivalent credit course (subject to academic centre approval).

<sup>(4)</sup> The FBD-HRM course expansion is well underway and HERM 670 and HERM 671 may be available to students in 2017-18; both courses will include an onsite component at a historical site, which will require an onsite fee of \$850 in addition to tuition to cover onsite costs. These courses are not mandatory.

Athabasca University  
2017-2018 Proposed Budget  
Schedule 5E: Graduate Program Budgets  
(Thousands of \$, except per course/program tuition fees and expenses per registration)

	<u>MBA</u>	<u>DBA</u>	<u>MEd</u>	<u>EdD</u>	<u>MHS</u>	<u>MNP</u>	<u>MAIS</u>	<u>MScIS</u>	<u>MCP</u>	<u>PBDLD</u>	<u>GHRM</u>	<u>PBDA</u>	<u>Total Graduate Programs</u>
<b>REVENUE</b>													
Provincial grants													
Federal grants							24						24
Grants Other													
Tuition and student fees	7,603	343	1,163	529	6,040		1,345	723	2,322	94	77	76	20,316
Contra revenue													
Sales of services and products	1,854	36	129	20	313		148	75	91	11	208	7	2,892
Investment income													
Donations													
Amortization of DCC													
Other Revenue													
	<u>9,458</u>	<u>378</u>	<u>1,292</u>	<u>549</u>	<u>6,353</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,517</u>	<u>798</u>	<u>2,413</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>285</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>23,232</u>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>													
Salaries	3,906	324	1,338	411	1,777	724	1,746	806	686	16	256	185	12,174,331
Employee Benefits	964	74	301	97	407	168	389	188	157	2	41	44	2,831,971
Travel	233	17	14	2	37		31	3	28	7	4	4	380,358
Material and supplies	653	16	101	15	504	55	169	69	212	19	10	3	1,825,597
Communications	36		13	2	16		15	5	9	2		2	98,413
Fees and purchased services	3,035	162	209	42	1,469	12	153	7	516	7		91	5,704,031
Institutional operations					4				5				9,000
Rental	217	10			12	18			100				357,218
Scholarships and bursaries													443
Amortization expense													-
	<u>9,043</u>	<u>603</u>	<u>1,976</u>	<u>569</u>	<u>4,226</u>	<u>977</u>	<u>2,503</u>	<u>1,077</u>	<u>1,713</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>311</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>23,381</u>
<b>Sub total</b>	414	(225)	(684)	(20)	2,127	(977)	(986)	(279)	700	52	(26)	(247)	(150)
<b>Net - after access grants</b>	<u>414</u>	<u>(225)</u>	<u>(684)</u>	<u>(20)</u>	<u>2,127</u>	<u>(977)</u>	<u>(986)</u>	<u>(279)</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>(26)</u>	<u>(247)</u>	<u>(150)</u>

## Expenses

In addition to the 67 percent of the budget representing salary and benefits, an additional 16 percent of expenses such as rent, utilities and maintenance contracts, and specified fees and services are not easily controllable in the short term. Non-controllable expenses therefore account for 83 percent of total expenses, leaving AU with control of just 17 percent, or \$24.1 million, of its expenses.

The expense increase of \$3.6 million over the previous year budget includes: \$0.3 million for inflation on learning resources, \$0.2 million for foreign exchange related cost for library database subscriptions, \$1.0 million for strategic investments, \$2.4 million for salary increases, including merit and cost of living adjustments, less a projected savings of \$0.3 million in IT maintenance agreement and telecommunication charges due to on-going vendor negotiations.

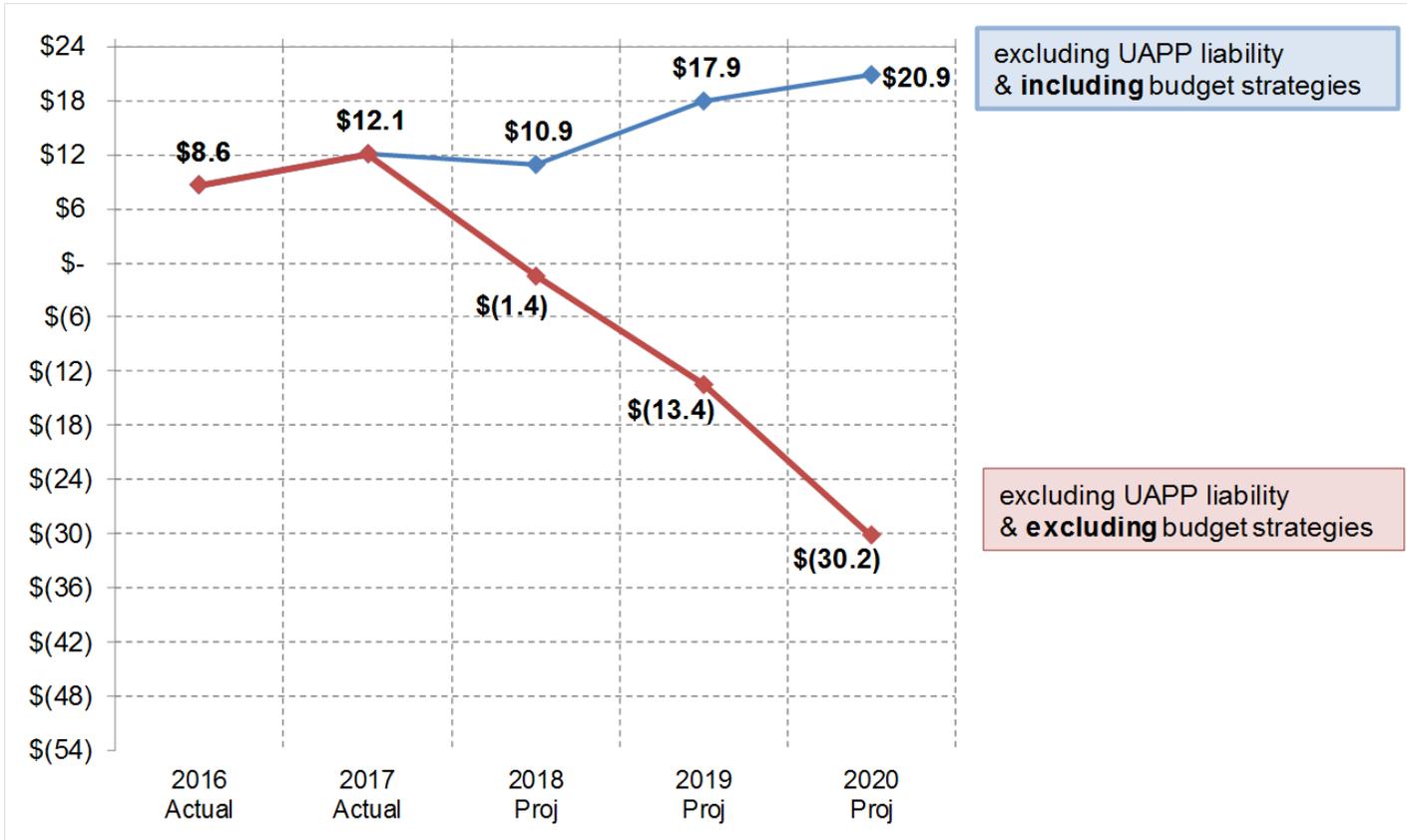
## Impact on Accumulated Surplus (deficit) from Operations

The budget submitted represents a balanced position for on-going operations. Schedules 6A and 6B detail the anticipated transactions that will affect the accumulated surplus (deficit) from operations. The schedules are presented showing the effect of including and excluding the budget strategies together with including and excluding the pension liability, for all three fiscal years beginning 2017-18.

If the budget strategies are not implemented, and excluding the \$17.7 million pension liability, AU is projected to have an accumulated deficit of \$1.4 million at the end of March 31, 2018. This is projected to rise to an accumulated deficit of \$30.2 million by the end of March 31, 2020.

# Schedule 6A: Accumulated Surplus from Operations Excluding Pension Liability

## FY2016 to FY2017 Actual & FY2018 to FY2020 Projections (in million of dollars)



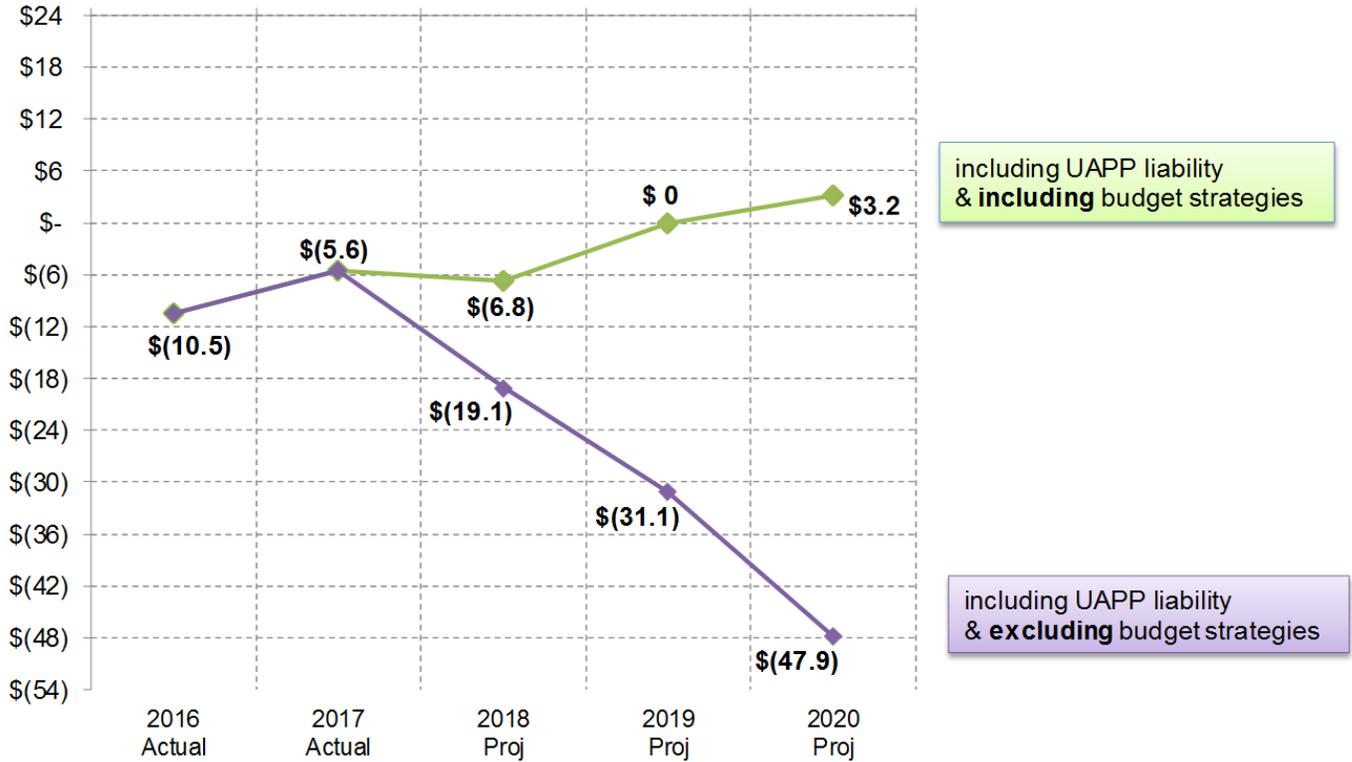
	Board Approved Budget July 28 2016	2017-18 Draft Budget & 2 Year Projections Without Pension Liability	2017-18 Draft Budget & 2 Year Projections Without Pension Liability
	Without Pension Liability	Based on Actuals for 2016-17	If Savings Strategies Not Implemented
			Based on Actuals for 2016-17
<i>(amounts in Thousands)</i>			
<b>Actual: March 31, 2016</b>	<b>\$ 8,625</b>	<b>\$ 8,625</b>	<b>\$ 8,625</b>
2016-17 Actual			
Surplus (Deficit)	(3,254)	2,188	2,188
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	2,856	2,656	2,656
Infrastructure Maintenance Program IT Funding	1,249	1,246	1,246
Net Capital Asset Additions	(5,478)	(2,567)	(2,567)
<b>Actual: March 31, 2017</b>	<b>\$ 3,998</b>	<b>\$ 12,148</b>	<b>\$ 12,148</b>
2017-18 Draft Budget			
Surplus (Deficit)	(6,792)	-	(12,294)
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	3,822	3,030	3,030
Net Capital Asset Additions	(4,926)	(4,234)	(4,234)
<b>Draft Budget: March 31, 2018 *</b>	<b>\$ (3,898)</b>	<b>\$ 10,944</b>	<b>\$ (1,350)</b>
2018-19 Projection			
Surplus (Deficit)	(9,089)	6,105	(12,895)
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	3,786	3,230	3,230
Net Capital Asset Additions	(3,571)	(2,351)	(2,351)
<b>Projection: March 31, 2019*</b>	<b>\$ (12,772)</b>	<b>\$ 17,928</b>	<b>\$ (13,366)</b>
2019-20 Projection			
Surplus (Deficit)	N/A	6,762	(13,058)
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)		2,707	2,707
Net Capital Asset Additions		(6,514)	(6,514)
<b>Projection: March 31, 2020*</b>		<b>\$ 20,883</b>	<b>\$ (30,231)</b>

Likewise, if the budget strategies are not implemented, and the \$17.7 million pension liability is included, AU is projected to have an accumulated deficit of \$19.1 million at the end of March 31, 2018. This is projected to rise to an accumulated deficit of \$47.9 million by the end of March 31, 2020.

**Schedule 6B: Accumulated Surplus from Operations Including Pension Liability**

**FY2016 to FY2017 Actual & FY2018 to FY2020 Projections**

(in million of dollars)



<i>(amounts in Thousands)</i>	Board Approved Budget July 28 2016	2017-18 Draft Budget & 2 Year Projections with Pension Liability	2017-18 Draft Budget & 2 Year Projections With Pension Liability
	With Pension Liability		If Savings Strategies Not Implemented
		Based on Actuals for 2016-17	Based on Actuals for 2016-17
<b>Actual: March 31, 2016</b>	<b>\$ (10,486)</b>	<b>\$ (10,486)</b>	<b>\$ (10,486)</b>
2016-17 Actual			
Surplus (Deficit)	(3,254)	2,188	2,188
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	2,856	2,656	2,656
Infrastructure Maintenance Program IT Funding	1,249	1,247	1,247
Net Capital Asset Additions	(5,478)	(2,567)	(2,567)
UAPP Pension Liability Adjustment		1,408	1,408
<b>Actual: March 31, 2017</b>	<b>\$ (15,113)</b>	<b>\$ (5,554)</b>	<b>\$ (5,554)</b>
2017-18 Draft Budget			
Deficit	(6,792)	-	(12,294)
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	3,822	3,030	3,030
Net Capital Asset Additions	(4,926)	(4,234)	(4,234)
<b>Draft Budget: March 31, 2018 *</b>	<b>\$ (23,009)</b>	<b>\$ (6,758)</b>	<b>\$ (19,052)</b>
2018-19 Projection			
Surplus (Deficit)	(9,089)	6,105	(12,895)
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	3,786	3,230	3,230
Net Capital Asset Additions	(3,571)	(2,351)	(2,351)
<b>Projection: March 31, 2019*</b>	<b>\$ (31,883)</b>	<b>\$ 226</b>	<b>\$ (31,068)</b>
2019-20 Projection			
Surplus (Deficit)		6,762	(13,058)
Amortization of Capital Assets (rev-exp net)	N/A	2,707	2,707
Net Capital Asset Additions		(6,514)	(6,514)
<b>Projection: March 31, 2020*</b>		<b>\$ 3,181</b>	<b>\$ (47,933)</b>

\* Revenue and Expenditures in these years are preliminary and will be refined in future year budgets

### Future Accounting Changes

University management has evaluated the recently pronounced changes to the Public-Sector Accounting Standards for this planning period and below is the assessment confirming no foreseen budget implications.

There are several standard changes effective April 1, 2017 that have no impact on budget amounts because the change relates to additional disclosure requirements and will be reflected in the audited financial statements notes, applied prospectively. These include PS 2200 Related Party Disclosures, PS 3210 Assets, PS 3320 Contingent Assets, and PS 3380 Contractual Rights.

Another standard change effective April 1, 2017, PS 3420 Inter Entity Transactions, applied prospectively, may influence budget amounts of the organization within a particular consolidation entity if the organization incorporates values for planned transactions, deemed inter entity, with a designated inter-entity. An example, shared services with an entity(s) within the Ministry of

Advanced Education consolidation. This scenario of a provider and or recipient of services is not applicable to the University over this planning period.

The upcoming standard change effective April 1, 2018, PS 3430 Restructuring Transactions would not impact the University directly therefore adopting it for budget development should not be necessary.

In regard to the upcoming standard change effective April 1, 2019 PS 3450 Financial Instruments, the University early adopted this section as at April 1, 2012 when it converted to Canadian Public-Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS) for the preparation and presentation of its audited financial statements.

**Athabasca University**  
**Schedule 7: Statement of Cash Flows**  
**For the year ended March 31 2019**  
**(thousands of dollars)**

	<u><b>BUDGET</b></u> <u><b>2017-2018</b></u>
<b>OPERATING TRANSACTIONS</b>	
Excess(Deficiency) of revenue over expense	\$ -
Add (deduct) non-cash items:	
Amortization of tangible capital assets	6,318
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	(3,288)
Change in employee future benefit liabilities	-
	<u>3,030</u>
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable	(109)
(Increase) decrease in inventories and prepaid expenses	(131)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	451
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	147
<b>Cash Provided by (Applied to) Operating Transactions</b>	<u><u><b>\$ 3,388</b></u></u>
 <b>CAPITAL TRANSACTIONS</b>	
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(6,303)
Proceeds on sale of tangible capital assets	-
<b>Cash Provided by (Applied to) Capital Transactions</b>	<u><u><b>(6,303)</b></u></u>
 <b>INVESTING TRANSACTIONS</b>	
Proceeds on sale of investments net of purchases	<u>1,275</u>
<b>Cash Provided by (Applied to) Investing Transactions</b>	<u><u>1,275</u></u>
 <b>FINANCING TRANSACTIONS</b>	
Endowment contributions	-
<b>Cash Provided by (Applied to) Financing Transactions</b>	<u><u>-</u></u>
 <b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	
	(1,640)
 <b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR *</b>	
	<u>5,255</u>
 <b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR</b>	
	<u><u><b>\$ 3,615</b></u></u>

## Appendix B: Enrolment Plan and Proposed Programming Changes

AU's enrolment projections are subject to change once the initiatives identified in the *Independent Third-Party Review* are implemented. The current assumptions are for modest growth in both undergraduate and graduate areas. The exception is the Bachelor of Nursing, where capacity management is expected to result in declines between 5 and 10 percent in the next three years. Newer programs, such as Applied Mathematics and Architecture, have not yet reached expected capacities but are showing steady rates of growth.

A key initiative following from the *Independent Third-Party Review* will be an analysis of current program offerings. Mid-year adjustments are not expected to impact the 2017-18 projections but will affect the program mix from 2018-19 onward.

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>University Certificate</b>										
Accounting	34.4	213	36	216	37.9	231	39.0	238	40.2	245
Advanced Accounting	5	21	4.9	24	5.3	24	5.5	25	5.6	25
Career Development	1.9	13	2.8	15	2.5	15	2.6	15	2.7	16
Computers and Management Information Systems	5.1	34	6.4	37	6.2	38	6.4	39	6.6	40
Computing and Information Systems	5.915	45	10.465	63	8.8	58	9.1	60	9.3	62
Counselling Women	3.5	17	4.7	23	4.4	22	4.5	23	4.7	23
E-Commerce	2.2	10	2.5	11	2.5	11	2.6	11	2.7	12
English Language Studies	0.1	1	0.1	1	0.1	1	0.1	1	0.1	1
Finance	5.5	26	5	30	5.6	30	5.8	31	5.9	32
French Language Proficiency	2.9	18	3.6	24	3.5	23	3.6	24	3.7	24
Game Development and Programming	2.2	10	3.2	14	2.9	13	3.0	13	3.1	14

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
Health Development Administration	0.1	1	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Heritage Resource Management	1.2	8	1.8	11	1.6	10	1.6	10	1.7	11
Human Resources and Labour Relations	28.9	168	32	176	32.8	185	33.8	191	34.8	196
Labour Studies Management	0.4	3	0.6	3	0.5	3	0.5	3	0.5	3
Applications Management	5.7	40	4.5	34	5.5	40	5.7	41	5.8	42
Foundations	8.8	45	7	45	8.5	48	8.8	49	9.0	51
Marketing	3.5	17	4.8	26	4.5	23	4.6	24	4.8	24
Public Administration	5.3	34	5.4	32	5.8	36	6.0	37	6.2	38

<b>University Certificate SubTotal</b>	<b>122.62</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>135.765</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>138.9</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>143.1</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>147.4</b>	<b>860</b>
University Diploma in Arts	1.5	11	3.7	15	3.2	16	3.3	16	3.4	17
<b>University Diploma in Arts SubTotal</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>17</b>
University Diploma in Health Administration	0.7	4	1.6	7	1.4	7	1.4	7	1.5	7
<b>University Diploma in Health Administration SubTotal</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>7</b>
University Diploma in Inclusive Education	4.375	25	7.625	35	7.4	37	7.6	38	7.9	39
<b>University Diploma in Inclusive Education SubTotal</b>	<b>4.375</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7.625</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>39</b>

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>Bachelor of Administration</b>										
Health Administration	0.4	3	0.7	5	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Industrial Relations & Human Resources Management Organization	0.4	2	0.6	4	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
	3.2	25	1.7	13	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
	0.8	8	0.7	7	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
<b>Bachelor of Administration SubTotal</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Bachelor of Arts</b>										
Anthropology	9.9	43	7.6	36	9.0	41	9.3	42	9.5	43
Canadian Studies	2.2	7	2	8	2.2	8	2.3	8	2.3	8
English	28.6	84	27	82	28.6	85	29.5	88	30.3	90
French	6.5	20	7.9	25	7.4	23	7.6	24	7.9	24

History	10.4	43	10.4	44	10.7	45	11.0	46	11.4	48
Humanities	4	17	4.7	20	4.5	19	4.6	20	4.8	20
Information Systems	3.2	17	3	12	3.2	15	3.3	15	3.4	16
Labour Studies	2.5	6	3.1	7	2.9	7	3.0	7	3.1	7
Political Economy	6.7	21	7	19	7.0	21	7.2	22	7.4	22
Political Science	8.5	28	11.8	35	10.4	32	10.7	33	11.0	34
Psychology	158.3	464	159	523	163.0	507	167.9	522	172.9	538
Sociology	11.5	41	13.6	38	12.9	41	13.3	42	13.7	43
Women's and Gender Studies	8.9	22	9.3	18	9.3	21	9.6	22	9.9	22
<b>Bachelor of Arts SubTotal</b>	<b>261.2</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>266.4</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>271.0</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>918</b>

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>Bachelor of Arts 3 Yr</b>										
Anthropology	2.4	17	2.7	20	2.8	20	2.9	21	3.0	21
English	14.7	53	16.3	58	16.8	60	17.3	62	17.8	64
French	6	20	5.9	16	6.5	20	6.7	21	6.9	21
General	17	78	18.8	83	19.4	87	20.0	90	20.6	92
History	4.5	28	4.5	25	4.9	29	5.0	30	5.2	31
Humanities	1.4	5	2.9	9	2.3	8	2.4	8	2.4	8
Information Systems	4.6	22	6.3	26	5.9	26	6.1	27	6.3	28
Labour Studies	1	9	3.3	14	2.3	12	2.4	12	2.4	13
Political Economy	1.4	7	1.1	7	1.4	8	1.4	8	1.5	8
Political Science	5.8	14	7.4	24	7.2	21	7.4	22	7.6	22
Psychology	43.7	189	48.6	189	50.1	205	51.6	211	53.2	217
Sociology	13.7	62	16.5	63	16.4	68	16.9	70	17.4	72
Women's and Gender Studies	2.2	10	1.5	8	2.0	10	2.1	10	2.1	11
<b>Bachelor of Arts 3 Yr SubTotal</b>	<b>118.4</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>135.8</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>138.0</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>142.1</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>146.4</b>	<b>609</b>

<b>Bachelor of Commerce</b>											
Accounting	218.6	796	241.7	840	244.9	870	252.2	896	259.8	923	
e-Commerce	14	44	7.9	36	11.6	43	11.9	44	12.3	46	
Finance	38.5	138	37	141	40.2	148	41.4	152	42.6	157	
General	56.6	270	66.2	290	65.3	298	67.3	307	69.3	316	
<b>Bachelor of Commerce SubTotal</b>	<b>327.7</b>	<b>1248</b>	<b>352.8</b>	<b>1307</b>	<b>362.0</b>	<b>1359</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>384.0</b>	<b>1442</b>	

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>Bachelor of General Studies</b>										
Applied Studies	34.9	181	34	182	34.8	184	35.8	190	36.9	195
Arts and Science	39.9	187	41.5	192	41.2	192	42.4	198	43.7	204
<b>Bachelor of General Studies Subtotal</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>75.5</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>76.0</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>78.3</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>80.6</b>	<b>399</b>
Bachelor of Health Administration	54.3	229	45.6	212	47.0	207	48.4	213	49.9	220
<b>Bachelor of Health Administration Subtotal</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>48.4</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>220</b>
Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations	126.7	522	125.6	533	129.0	539	132.9	555	136.9	572
<b>Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations Subtotal</b>	<b>126.7</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>125.6</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>129.0</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>132.9</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>136.9</b>	<b>572</b>
Bachelor of Management										
General	35.7	153	34.9	146	35.9	152	37.0	157	38.1	161
Human Resources	38.4	141	36.6	147	38.1	146	39.2	150	40.4	155
Indigenous Nations and Organizations	2	6	1.1	5	1.6	6	1.6	6	1.7	6
Marketing	24.8	90	29.1	113	27.4	103	28.2	106	29.1	109

<b>Bachelor of Management Subtotal</b>	<b>100.9</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>101.7</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>103.0</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>106.1</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>109.3</b>	<b>432</b>
Bachelor of Management 3 Yr General	139.2	742	149.3	758	153.0	795	157.6	819	162.3	843
<b>Bachelor of Management 3 Yr Subtotal</b>	<b>139.2</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>149.3</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>153.0</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>157.6</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>162.3</b>	<b>843</b>

Program/Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
Bachelor of Nursing										
Post-LPN Bachelor of Nursing	397.74	1012	418.948	1183	404.4	1126	416.5	1160	429.0	1195
Post-RN Bachelor of Nursing	107.55	602	101.587	577	97.5	554	100.4	571	103.4	588
<b>Bachelor of Nursing SubTotal</b>	<b>505.29</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>520.535</b>	<b>1760</b>	<b>501.9</b>	<b>1680</b>	<b>517.0</b>	<b>1730</b>	<b>532.5</b>	<b>1782</b>
<b>Bachelor of Professional Arts</b>										
Communication Studies	56.9	243	54.9	239	58.9	254	60.7	262	62.5	269
Criminal Justice	61.4	264	73.4	270	71.0	281	73.1	289	75.3	298
Governance, Law, and Management	14.3	59	13.9	54	14.9	60	15.3	62	15.8	64
Human Services	49.3	189	55.5	204	55.2	207	56.9	213	58.6	220
<b>Bachelor of Professional Arts SubTotal</b>	<b>181.9</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>197.7</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>200.0</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>212.2</b>	<b>851</b>
<b>Bachelor of Science</b>										
Applied Math	2.333	11	5.2	19	4.0	16	4.1	16	4.2	17
Architecture	4.7	17	10.9	43	11.0	42	11.3	43	11.7	45
Computing and Information Systems	79.7	310	80.2	304	85.2	327	87.8	337	90.4	347
General	55	266	42.6	180	52.0	238	53.6	245	55.2	252

Human Science	16.3	65	37.3	153	28.5	116	29.4	119	30.2	123
<b>Bachelor of Science SubTotal</b>	<b>158.03</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>176.2</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>180.7</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>186.1</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>191.7</b>	<b>784</b>

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>Post-Baccalaureate Certificate</b>										
Data Analytics	3.25	9	3.25	8	3.6	9	3.7	9	3.8	10
Information Security	0	0	1.5	3	1.6	4	1.6	4	1.7	4
Information Technology Management	2.75	4	3.5	7	3.4	6	3.5	6	3.6	6
Instructional Design	7.992	16	7.66	15	8.6	17	8.9	18	9.1	18
Technology-Based Learning	6.55	19	9.103	20	8.6	21	8.9	22	9.1	22
<b>Post-Baccalaureate Certificate SubTotal</b>	<b>20.542</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>25.013</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Post-Baccalaureate Diploma</b>										
Architecture	7.704	57	5.136	43	6.1	47	6.3	48	6.5	50
Counselling	26.018	59	20.349	48	21.9	51	22.6	53	23.2	54
Distance Education Technology	3.004	10	2.837	9	2.8	9	2.9	9	3.0	10
Heritage Resource Management	11.51	33	11.841	29	11.0	29	11.3	30	11.7	31
Instructional Design	4.67	11	4.506	16	4.3	13	4.4	13	4.6	14
Leadership and Management	0	0	0.133	3	1.7	38	1.8	39	1.8	40
Legislative Drafting	9.016	41	9.185	44	8.6	40	8.9	41	9.1	42
Management	46.4	162	43	159	42.2	152	43.5	157	44.8	161
<b>Post-Baccalaureate Diploma SubTotal</b>	<b>108.32</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>96.987</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>98.6</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>101.6</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>104.6</b>	<b>402</b>

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>Master of Arts</b> Integrated Studies	167.36	523	147.841	456	148.0	460	152.4	474	157.0	488
<b>Master of Arts SubTotal</b>	<b>167.36</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>147.841</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>148.0</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>152.4</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>157.0</b>	<b>488</b>
Master of Business Administration	301.47	768	306.049	824	299.9	802	308.9	826	318.2	851
<b>Master of Business Administration SubTotal</b>	<b>301.47</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>306.049</b>	<b>824</b>	299.9	<b>802</b>	<b>308.9</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>318.2</b>	<b>851</b>
<b>Master of Counselling</b> Art Therapy	19.5	30	19	29	19.2	29	19.8	30	20.4	31
Career Counselling Counselling	1.75	2	2.5	4	2.1	3	2.2	3	2.2	3
Psychology	227	331	225	329	225.3	329	232.1	339	239.0	349
School Counseling	0	0	0.75	3	0.4	1	0.4	1	0.4	1
<b>Master of Counselling (Collaborative) SubTotal</b>	<b>248.25</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>247.25</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>247.0</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>254.4</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>262.0</b>	<b>384</b>
Master of Education Distance Education	110.59	321	105.932	293	106.0	301	109.2	310	112.5	319
<b>Master of Education SubTotal</b>	<b>110.59</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>105.932</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>106.0</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>109.2</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>112.5</b>	<b>319</b>
<b>Master of Health Studies</b> Leadership	173.09	585	154.247	498	155.0	513	159.7	528	164.4	544
<b>Master of Health Studies SubTotal</b>	<b>173.09</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>154.247</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>155.0</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>159.7</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>164.4</b>	<b>544</b>

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
<b>Master of Nursing</b> Generalist	295.45	711	333.87	783	332.5	789	342.5	813	352.7	837

Nurse Practitioner	226.49	546	253.301	598	253.5	604	261.1	622	268.9	641
<b>Master of Nursing SubTotal</b>	<b>521.94</b>	<b>1257</b>	<b>587.171</b>	<b>1381</b>	<b>586.0</b>	<b>1393</b>	<b>603.6</b>	<b>1435</b>	<b>621.7</b>	<b>1478</b>
<b>Master of Science</b>										
Information Systems	56.134	150	54.27	146	55.0	147	56.7	151	58.3	156
Master of Science in Information Systems	8.407	33								
<b>Master of Science SubTotal</b>	<b>64.541</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>54.27</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>56.7</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>156</b>
Post Masters Certificate										
Counselling Psychology	3.25	9	3.5	6	4.0	9	9.2	36	9.5	37
<b>Post Masters Certificate SubTotal</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Post-Master's Diploma</b>										
Nurse Practitioner	11.218	34	9.48	30	10.0	31	10.3	32	10.6	33
<b>Post-Master's Diploma SubTotal</b>	<b>11.218</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9.48</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>33</b>
Doctor of Business Administration	20.336	29	30	40	30.0	41	31	42	31.8	43
<b>Doctor of Business Administration SubTotal</b>	<b>20.336</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>43</b>

Program/ Specialization	15-16 FLE	Actual Headcount	16-17 FLE	Unofficial Headcount	17-18 FLE	Projected Headcount	18-19 FLE	Projected Headcount	19-20 FLE	Projected Headcount
Distance Education	31.5	45	43	53	43.0	57	44.3	59	45.6	60
<b>Doctor of Education SubTotal</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>44.3</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>60</b>
Open Studies	4504.2	27925	4534.5	27861	4602.1	28298	4740.2	29147	4882.4	30021
<b>Open Studies SubTotal</b>	<b>4504.2</b>	<b>27925</b>	<b>4534.5</b>	<b>27861</b>	<b>4602.1</b>	<b>28298</b>	<b>4740.2</b>	<b>29147</b>	<b>4882.4</b>	<b>30021</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8469</b>	<b>41129</b>	<b>8644.76</b>	<b>41458</b>	<b>8723.0</b>	<b>42,064</b>	<b>8993.9</b>	<b>43362</b>	<b>9263.7</b>	<b>44663</b>
% Change			2.1%		0.9%		3.0%		3.0%	

## Appendix C: Research, Applied Research, and Scholarly Activities

### Strategic Goals and Initiatives

The *cultivation of research excellence* underpins AU's research, applied research, and scholarly endeavours. In keeping with the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review*, re-envisioning the University's *Strategic Research Plan* and delineating the key themes that will guide its future research endeavours will assume primary importance in the upcoming months. Anticipated in the plan is an increased emphasis on the promotion of regionally relevant research to examine environmental, social, health, economic, cultural, and political realities in northern Alberta, as well as a strong focus on innovation in online, distance, and workplace learning. Collaborating with business, government, and other stakeholders to build research capacity in northern Alberta will assume greater importance. The creation of a Northern Alberta Research Unit was suggested in the *Independent Third-Party Review* as a means to achieve these goals; its potential form and function will be examined in the upcoming months.

The cultivation of research excellence demands ongoing implementation of innovative strategies to build research capacity, including fostering the success of both faculty and students in securing competitive, external research grants and awards, engaging in the training of future generations of highly skilled research personnel, and increasing our research chair complement. The recruitment of three research chairs, whose research programs are strongly aligned with those of other researchers within the University, is expected to be completed in the upcoming months and will strengthen our research and scholarly endeavours yet further.

The recently adopted proactive project management approach to the provision of research services, including grant administration and milestone reporting, has shown tremendous promise. Consideration is now being given to adapting this approach, in conjunction with enhancements to our grantsmanship mentoring program, to further increase researchers' success in securing funding to sustain their research programs. In addition, processes for awarding internal grants will be re-examined to ensure that available funds are being utilized effectively in building research capacity.

AU's Industry Liaison Officer has been instrumental in forging robust academic-industry partnerships with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in northern Alberta and beyond. Intended outcomes of this initiative include fostering innovation with a view to bringing new products and services to market and providing high-quality, industry-based research training opportunities for our undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Our intention is to secure enduring funding to support this position going forward.

Development of a robust set of metrics to systematically document not only the outputs, but also the impacts, of the research conducted by AU faculty and students is a key priority for the upcoming year and beyond. Essential to this initiative is the creation of innovative strategies to efficiently capture information from a variety of sources, ranging from traditional citation indexes to social media. Doing so will help enhance the competitiveness of our researchers' grant applications, increase their profile nationally and internationally, and enhance the University's status as a CARI. In addition to this, recent enhancements to AU Space, a searchable open access repository, will afford others free access to AU-based research outputs.

In conjunction with the University of Alberta, AU has entered into an Agreement on Animal Care Ethics Review and has initiated the process for obtaining an initial *Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) Probationary Certificate of Good Animal Practice* to support researchers who use animals for research, teaching, or testing. The review and approval process will occur in the fall of 2017. This important joint initiative will foster research excellence, ensure compliance with accepted animal care practices and standards, reduce duplication of effort, and result in cost savings.

### **Synergies with the *Alberta Research and Innovation Plan***

The breadth of our research agenda and its synergy with the priorities articulated in the *Alberta Research and Innovation Plan* are evident in the select examples that follow. Enhancing the visibility of the work of our researchers, including those whose research centers on northern Alberta, will be an important priority in the upcoming year.

#### **- *Effective resource management and environmental stewardship***

Examining the cumulative effects of land and water use in the Athabasca River Basin, which is located in northern Alberta, remains a high priority for many AU researchers. In some cases, their research involves the use of mathematical modelling to predict the impact of changes in land and water use over time. In others, it comprises direct examination of the cumulative effects of land and water use on aquatic life, or investigation of the genomic sequences of micro-organisms as a means of expediting reclamation. Paired with this work is the ongoing development of the *Bibliography of the Athabasca River Basin (BARB)*, an online repository that offers free access to publications and reports, interactive maps, and audio-visual resources for researchers and other stakeholders. Exploring the utility of data hubs and data repositories to foster open access to scientific data and to increase the transparency and reproducibility of research is an important priority initiative for the upcoming year.

Sustainable energy comprises yet another area of focus for AU researchers. Mapping interconnections within the Alberta energy sector, with a view to leveraging influence and fostering energy transition, and supporting the adoption of solar power in rural Alberta communities, are two examples of ongoing research in this regard. An evolving area of research is the emergence of citizen science in an age of global environmental uncertainty and its potential impact on energy-related policy development.

#### **- *Development of a strong economy***

Fostering robust academic-industry partnerships with small and medium enterprises in the educational technology, oil and gas, and gaming sectors (among others) remains a priority. These partnerships not only help diversify the Alberta economy but also provide high-quality, industry-based training opportunities for AU students and postdoctoral fellows. Other ongoing initiatives—a focus on artificial intelligence, including intelligent pedagogical agents; serious gaming; data analytics; personalized learning; social networking; and OERs—will continue to enhance virtual learning environments for K-12 and adult learners in Alberta and beyond. Complementing these initiatives is the systematic investigation of privacy concerns arising from the use of big data and learning analytics in the educational sector and beyond.

Recruitment is in progress for a Canada Research Chair whose research will centre on digital disruption and its impact on organizational transformation. This emerging area of focus will complement other ongoing research, such as that related to financial literacy and financial management of small businesses, inform how business is conducted in the future, and contribute to the development of a strong economy in Alberta and beyond.

▪ **Supporting healthy Albertans in all of our communities**

Emerging from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* are numerous initiatives across Canada to preserve Indigenous heritage and cultural practices. One of our researchers was a member of the planning team for a recently held conference and subsequent round table that examined the relationship between museums and heritage organizations and Indigenous peoples. Other researchers are engaged in examining Indigenous health and well-being and traditional medicine, as well as the historical cultivation of forest gardens by Indigenous peoples.

The intent to increase understanding of cultural practices is also evident in the research of other University scholars who are examining, for example, "boom towns" in ancient civilizations, political and mercantile elites of 16<sup>th</sup>-century India, and the manner in which relationship to the land is embedded in Iranian poetry. Ultimately, studies such as these will promote intercultural understanding within Albertan communities and beyond.

AU researchers continue to make substantive contributions to the understanding of health promotion and the management of chronic diseases, such as dementia, diabetes, and cancer. Research aimed at developing new antibiotics to treat infection is still in its early stages but holds promise. Other diverse areas of health-related research, including relationship-based parenting and elder care, have the potential to contribute to evidence-informed decision-making and policy development in health care. In keeping with this, garnering patients' input into the Alberta Innovates Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) Patient Engagement Platform remains a high priority in ensuring patients' and caregivers' voices are heard in planning and delivering health care in Alberta.

Noteworthy is the congruence between the priorities articulated in the *Alberta Research and Innovation Plan*, the recently released *Independent Third-Party Review*, and the research being conducted by AU researchers. Our strategic focus on cultivating research excellence and engaging with industry will assist in furthering these priorities and advance AU's research agenda.

## Appendix D: Community Outreach and Under-represented Learners

### Alberta Dual Credit

AU is proud to take part in Alberta's Dual Credit program, which gives high school students a head start towards further studies and employment opportunities. Students in the Aspen View Public School District and at Foothills Academy in Calgary have access to AU credit courses, and interest from other school divisions is growing. To better share information and support student success, we have developed a *Dual Credit Onboarding and Retention Plan* and implementation is under way. The construction of a 1000-student high school in Athabasca presents a wealth of opportunities for expansion. The University community looks forward to growing the program and furthering the goals expressed in Alberta Education's Dual Credit Strategy.

### First Nations Colleges

AU has articulation agreements with five Alberta First Nations post-secondary institutions: University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills (UnBQ), Maskwacis Cultural College, Old Sun Community College, Red Crow Community College, and Yellowhead Tribal College. In total, about 270 courses from these institutions are eligible for transfer credit into AU certificate, diploma, and degree programs. AU has also offered on-site courses at Yellowhead Tribal College and UnBQ.

The University continues to support Indigenous learners through the Learning Communities Project. In partnership with business, industry, other educational institutions, and 12 Alberta First Nations and Métis communities, we are creating learning and skills training opportunities for Indigenous peoples living in northern Alberta. More than 3,500 participants have already benefited. Sustained funding for this initiative is currently being sought.

AU also participates in about 20 events per year that target First Nations students through the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Council, the Alberta Aboriginal Recruitment Network, and First Nations career fairs and tradeshow. These events provide a platform to showcase the University's open admissions policy and the opportunity AU offers for First Nations students to earn a degree without leaving their home community.

Re-engaging with collaborating institutions and exploring new opportunities to promote existing articulation agreements and online course delivery strategies that serve the educational needs of First Nations students are our priorities for the year ahead.

### Corporate Partnerships

AU works with corporations and non-profit organizations to increase employee access to post-secondary education. The University's flexible learning platform and online course delivery meet the needs of employers looking to provide educational and professional development opportunities for their employees and strengthen the skill set of their workforce, particularly workers in distributed work environments. In addition, AU recognizes in-house corporate training and provides pathways for approved company courses to ladder into certificate, diploma, and degree programs. Through its

corporate relationships, AU is able to leverage new prospective student markets, generate new revenue streams, and position itself as a quality provider of post-secondary academic education and professional development for national and global workforces. There is considerable potential for growth and enhancement, particularly in open access and specialized programming.

### **Alumni Relations**

Engagement of alumni as lifelong learners, supporters, and advocates of the University continues to be an AU priority. At over 24,000 members, dispersed across Canada and around the world, the alumni community is AU's largest and most influential stakeholder group.

Alumni initiatives provide opportunities to develop long-term relationships that benefit AU. Alumni events, many of which also include current students, are part of a long-term, strategic relationship-building process, an essential step in growing AU's development program. Alumni serve as ambassadors for the University, formally and informally promoting AU and helping to strengthen its profile in Alberta and around the world. Twenty-six well-attended events were held across Canada in 2016-17.

Alumni engagement is also fostered through communications such as alumni newsletters and connection through social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. In an effort to enhance AU's profile in the community and increase philanthropic support for AU's programs and student services, engagement initiatives often include community stakeholders such as donors and community leaders.

### **Science Outreach Athabasca**

AU supports Science Outreach Athabasca—a group of teachers, scientists, and others interested in science that promotes science awareness in the greater Athabasca area and documents the scientific research done on the Athabasca River Basin. Monthly activities include science talks, camps, travelling exhibits, bird and butterfly counts, and other events. Topics include archeology, astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physical geography, meteorology, and physics.

## Appendix E: Internationalization

Athabasca University seeks to provide a global orientation for its students in a number of ways, including study and research abroad. Through international partnerships and other collaborative opportunities, AU interacts with other educational institutions, researchers, and students throughout the world. AU scholars are recognized worldwide for their expertise and research in distance education, and each year AU welcomes visiting international scholars representing a range of disciplines. In the coming year and informed by the *Independent Third-Party Review*, AU will identify emerging opportunities within international markets. With a coordinated and focused approach, AU will strengthen its international position as a world-class online and distance education provider, and reaffirm its position as a global leader in educational innovation and research.

## Appendix F/G Capital Plan

AU shares the Alberta Advanced Education system vision that

*Every Albertan has the same opportunity to fulfill their full potential and contribute to their communities by obtaining a high-quality post-secondary education regardless of financial circumstances.*

As Canada's only open, online, distance learning university, AU has the fundamental ingredients to be a global leader in providing digitally mediated learning opportunities. Regardless of what community our learners call home, AU provides diverse, geographically independent learning opportunities. With nearly 50 years in this arena, AU is strategically poised to reach learners of any age and demographic—anytime, anyplace, and anywhere.

AU is committed to building on its success, enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning experience and advancing knowledge through cutting-edge research. Fundamental to this is the ability to embrace and adopt current and emergent technologies to allow the University to maintain and surpass our reputation as a post-secondary leader in digital learning. This, coupled with increasing and evolving learner expectations, requires continuous investment and development of AU's information and communication technology (ICT) and physical infrastructure.

Guided by the principles of accessibility, affordability, quality, and accountability, the *Summary Capital and ICT Infrastructure Plan 2017-2022* responds to the ongoing challenges and requirements for various University functions and services, and outlines long-range developments and goals. These long-range goals are subject to change, as the University is undergoing institution-wide planning in response to the *Independent Third-Party Review*. We are assessing our capital needs necessary for this transformation. This Capital Plan, therefore, is transitional in nature and is subject to change.

AU's capital funding requirement to address projects in our focus areas is \$35.68 million, of which AU plans to fund \$18.17 million internally over the five-year period. AU requests \$17.51 million in additional funding, including the planned receipt of funding from the Infrastructure Maintenance Program, in keeping with funding levels from the previous fiscal year. Currently, none of the projects in our capital plan have government-approved capital funding.

The priority projects expressed in this plan are fiscally prudent and reflect a careful consideration of competing needs. Achieving the capital priorities outlined in this plan will help AU address our short-term challenges and set a foundation upon which we can realize the recommendations of the *Independent Third-Party Review*. The University's focus in 2017-18 and 2018-19 will be to ensure that core fundamental initiatives are undertaken in the areas of ICT and facilities so that the University can successfully move ahead toward a sustainable future.

## Capital Projects

Table 1: Summary FY 2017-22 Capital funding Request (*thousands of dollars*)

	Category: I & II	Category III	Category IV			
	Preservation and Renewal (Minor and Major)	Expansion or Replacement	New Facilities or Systems	Total	AU Funded	Government Sources <sup>(1)</sup>
Information and Communication Technology	\$ 18,040	\$ 4,270	\$ -	\$ 22,310	\$ 16,810	\$ 5,500
Facilities and Other	10,680	2,690	-	13,370	1,360	12,010
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 28,720</b>	<b>\$ 6,960</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 35,680</b>	<b>\$ 18,170</b>	<b>\$ 17,510</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> includes Government of Alberta Infrastructure Maintenance Program (IMP) grants. IMP funding levels have historically fluctuated, therefore for planning purposes receipt of a minimum of \$1M in IMP funding was reflected in the plan. However, it is anticipated that funding levels will remain concurrent with the previous fiscal year or be increased to reflect AU's Critical dependence on its ICT infrastructure.

The University's capital priorities are presented below under three main headings:

- Priority Projects
- ICT Projects
- Facilities and Other Projects

These sections are further subdivided using the categories established by the Government of Alberta in the Building and Land Information Management System (BLIMS) for one-time or envelope funding of projects:

- Category I: Preservation of Existing Facilities/Capital Assets (< \$10 million)
- Category II: Preservation of Existing Facilities/Capital Assets (> \$10 million)
- Category III: Expansion or Replacement
- Category IV: New Facilities or Systems of Major Economic Benefit to Alberta

A consolidated project view and cash flow summary is presented in Appendix A.

## Priority Projects

The three top priority projects listed below are critical to the University's ability to achieve the mission set out by the Government of Alberta. These projects require \$2.192 million over the next three years.

Project	Program	ICT Investment
Network Renewal	Infrastructure Renewal Program	\$ 950,000
Grade Integration Project	Application Suite: Pedagogy and Research	\$ 850,000

Budget Planning System Upgrade	Infrastructure Operation Support Program	\$ 392,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,192,000</b>

### Network Renewal

The network renewal project will deliver a more secure and stable network environment to our learners by deploying current security technologies such as intrusion detection, intrusion prevention, and data loss prevention, as well as enable AU to increase network availability and simplify the management of the overall network. This project will be completed during the 2017-18 fiscal year and, assuming the same level of Infrastructure Maintenance Program (IMP) funding as fiscal 2016-17, will be funded from that allocation.

### Grade Integration Project

This project will improve the length of time currently required to provide grades to students, and ensure that consistency of grades is maintained throughout our various student-facing systems. It will also drive efficiencies for both faculty and Office of the Registrar personnel, eliminating the current need for manual re-entry of grades across multiple systems. This internally funded project will be completed during the 2017-18 fiscal year.

### Budget Planning System Upgrade

This budget planning system upgrade is key to our ability to ensure financial accountability of budget holders, by providing them with timely financial data that enables them to respond to budget variances and rebalance their budgets in a timely and effective manner. This project will be completed during the 2017-18 fiscal year and, assuming the same level of IMP funding as fiscal 2016-17, will be funded from that allocation.

In addition to our noted top three priority projects, AU has identified a number of other key priority foundational projects that are vital to ensuring that the University achieves the desired outcomes outlined within the 2017-2020 CIP. These include

- 1) Main Campus Building Systems Upgrades
- 2) Consolidated Space in Greater Edmonton
- 3) Land Development and Real Estate Development Plan.

## ICT Projects

AU's operations rely entirely on ICT-enabled capabilities. Educational access, learner support services, and administrative activities are provided by the University via the Internet. AU's client-facing operations depend on

- the University website to create awareness and provide information
- online enrolment and course registration services
- online course provision and instruction
- online assessment, including assignment and exam submission

- online student services for advising and assisting students, and for maintaining students' academic records.

AU's reliance on ICT infrastructure is further demonstrated by

- continuous undergraduate enrolment (students start programs and courses year-round)
- asynchronous, self-paced study and open course scheduling (course materials are readily available online, and students complete courses on their own schedule and can choose to start any course in any month)
- distributed learning (students do not receive instruction or course materials at a specific location such as a university campus, allowing them to remain in their home communities and places of employment).

AU's ICT infrastructure, therefore, must provide students with continuous and reliable service in support of their academic success. To continue to provide high-quality learning opportunities and student services AU must continually invest in its ICT services and capabilities as they function as the University's equivalent of a physical campus (e.g., classrooms, meeting rooms, lecture halls, laboratories, libraries, common rooms, workspaces).

AU is now at a point in its evolution where significant investment is needed to refresh and build upon its ICT infrastructure and to stay current with technology. This is critical in allowing AU to leverage virtualization and hybrid computing environments, make process improvements, and deploy a more cost-effective and elastic environment that will enable the University to not only keep pace within the post-secondary space, but to provide a more robust, reliable, and consistent user experience for its learners.

To achieve its mandate and support strategic growth, the University must

- effectively manage software development projects,
- upgrade and expand ICT infrastructure, and
- leverage economies of scale available from modern technologies, such as virtualization.

This will

- reduce costs through economies of scale,
- ensure high quality services,
- reduce environmental impacts, through higher densities within computing environments,
- utilize less energy, and
- reduce physical space demands for ICT equipment significantly.

To achieve these goals and enable AU to continue to provide superior post-secondary learning opportunities, AU will require \$22,310,204 in strategic capital investments over the next five years. Table 2 provides a summary of the fiscal 2017-2022 ICT capital funding request.

Table 2: Summary FY 2018-22 ICT Capital Funding Request (*thousands of dollars*)

BLIMS* Category	Program Totals <sup>(1)</sup>	Proposed Funding Sources	
		AU	Government <sup>(2)</sup>
1: Preservation and Renewal of Existing Facilities / Capital Assets (Minor)	\$ 18,040	\$ 13,040	\$ 5,000
2: Preservation and Renewal of Existing Facilities and Capital Assets (Major)	-	-	-
3: Expansion or Replacement	4,270	3,770	500
4: New Facilities or Systems of Major Economic Benefit to Alberta	-	-	-
<b>Total 5-Year Plan</b>	<b>\$ 22,310</b>	<b>\$ 16,810</b>	<b>\$ 5,500</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> categories based on the Government of Alberta's Building and Land Information Management System (BLIMS) for one-time or envelope funding of projects.

<sup>(2)</sup> includes Government of Alberta Infrastructure Maintenance Program (IMP) grants. IMP funding levels have historically fluctuated, therefore for planning purposes receipt of a minimum of \$1M in IMP funding was reflected in the plan. However, it is anticipated that funding levels will remain concurrent with the previous fiscal year or be increased to reflect AU's Critical dependence on its ICT infrastructure.

### ICT Capital Programs

The following describes the nature of each ICT capital program (technology layer) to which technology investments are allocated:

**Interfaces:** Interfaces are a user's window to information, systems, services, and resources.

Windows within this environment will be both intuitive and adaptive, providing users with the information and functions they require to effectively achieve their personal objectives.

**Application Suites:** Application suites are clusters of related systems and services with functionality to accomplish specific business or academic processes. Suites comprise both large enterprise-level systems and smaller specialized systems, but they are designed to work in concert with each other and to exchange data with dependent applications across suites and the analytical platform. There are three inter-related suites within this layer:

- **Pedagogy and Research:** Systems and services focused on teaching, learning, and research (e.g., learning management system).
- **Student Service and Administration:** Systems and services focused on the provision of effective and responsive student service and related administrative systems (e.g., student relationship management, content management system).

- **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP):** Systems and services related to AU’s ERP processes (e.g., finance system, human resources/payroll system, student information system).

**Analytical Platform:** The analytical platform is both a data warehouse and an analytical and reporting platform. It harvests data from integrated applications, analyzes these data, and provides views to this information in support of effective decision making.

**ICT Infrastructure:** The ICT infrastructure functions as the foundational layer upon which all other components are reliant to operate effectively. It is composed of two sub-layers:

- **Infrastructure Renewal:** This layer includes the hardware and utilities on which all other layers are dependent (e.g., servers, storage, networks).
- **Infrastructure Operations Support:** This layer includes the systems and services that work in direct correlation with the components in the Infrastructure Renewal layer to ensure effective business operations and continuity for all users across the institution (e.g., disaster recovery capabilities, intrusion detection, systems monitoring).

**Enterprise Architecture (EA) Planning:** While development efforts across the University may vary year-to-year it is important to recognize that these projects must be designed, engineered, developed, and sustained as one holistic and integrated environment. Therefore, an EA Planning Program has been established to develop EA planning capabilities and designs.

### ICT Capital Investment Plans

The following section provides an overview of investment plans for the development and renewal of AU’s ICT environment over the next five fiscal years.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the estimated annual investment costs for each program within the ICT Investment Portfolio over the five-year plan. All proposed technology projects will follow AU’s ICT Investment Governance Framework. This framework assesses the value and alignment of ICT investments with the academy’s strategic goals, and the value returned upon their completion.

**Table 3: Estimated Annual Investment Cost by Program (Five-Year Plan)**

ICT Portfolio	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	Program Totals
Application Suite: Pedagogy & Research Program	\$ 850,000	-	1,248,112	-	-	2,098,112
Interface Program	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	1,000,000
Application Suite: Student Service & Administration Program	375,382	-	392,131	-	-	767,513
Infrastructure Renewal Program	1,050,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,450,000
Application Suite: Enterprise Resource Planning Program	1,592,000	1,327,346	1,098,177	-	-	4,017,523
Infrastructure Operations Support Program	807,056	500,000	545,000	6,295,000	175,000	8,322,056
Enterprise Architecture Planning Program	-	-	385,000	-	-	385,000
Analytical Platform program	-	224,056	3,545,944	-	-	3,770,000
Northern Gateway Shared Services Data Center Study	500,000	-	-	-	-	500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,174,438</b>	<b>\$ 3,151,402</b>	<b>\$ 7,314,364</b>	<b>\$ 6,395,000</b>	<b>\$ 275,000</b>	<b>\$ 22,310,204</b>

Table 4 provides a summary of the proposed funding sources to collectively develop the programs. Over the next five years AU plans to contribute \$16,810,204 to develop and strengthen its learning environment and is requesting that the Government of Alberta or other potential funding sources contribute \$500,000 in addition to the established IMP grants.

**Table 4: Summary of Proposed Funding Sources for Program Development**

ICT Portfolio	Proposed Funding Sources		
	Program Totals	AU	Government <sup>(1)</sup>
Application Suite: Pedagogy & Research Program	\$ 2,098,112	\$ 2,098,112	-
Interface Program	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
Application Suite: Student Service & Administration Program	767,513	767,513	-
Infrastructure Renewal Program	1,450,000	1,450,000	-
Application Suite: Enterprise Resource Planning Program	4,017,523	4,017,523	-
Infrastructure Operations Support Program	8,322,056	8,322,056	-
Enterprise Architecture Planning Program	385,000	385,000	-
Analytical Program	3,770,000	3,770,000	-
Northern Alberta Shared Services Data Centre Study	500,000	-	500,000
Government of Alberta Infrastructure Maintenance Program	-	(5,000,000)	5,000,000
<b>Total 5 Year Plan</b>	<b>\$ 22,310,204</b>	<b>\$16,810,204</b>	<b>\$ 5,500,000</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> includes Government of Alberta Infrastructure Maintenance Program (IMP) grants. IMP funding levels have historically fluctuated, therefore for planning purposes receipt of a minimum of \$1M in IMP funding was reflected in the plan. However, it is anticipated that funding levels will remain concurrent with the previous fiscal year or be increased to reflect AU's Critical dependence on its ICT infrastructure.

## 1.1 Category I: Preservation of Existing Systems—Minor: \$18,040,204

### 1.1.1 Applications Suite: Pedagogy and Research Program

Addresses projects aimed at renewing capabilities or establishing new capabilities related to teaching, learning, and research-related systems and services.

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$2,098,112
CIP Goals	Accessibility; Quality

**Program Development Goals:** The first goal of this program is the continued modernization of AU's Learning Management System (LMS). Currency and integration of the LMS with core systems and services are required to transform and optimize the online and distance learning experience, and to support the success of learners with varied backgrounds, degrees of preparation, and geographic locales. Integration between the LMS's functions and other systems within the technological environment facilitates the collection and assessment of information about a learner's progress and timely intervention with the appropriate supports. The second goal of this program is to establish capabilities to streamline the development, delivery, and invigilation of examinations.

**Risk Statement:** The LMS is a core component of AU's environment and is critical to sustaining the University's reputation as a leader in online and distance education in Alberta and the global community. Failure to deliver a high-quality online experience, achieved through a fully integrated LMS, will result in student dissatisfaction, lower academic success rates, poorer learning outcomes, and loss of reputation and competitiveness for AU, culminating in enrolment decline.

An online examination system and automated examination question bank are essential counterparts to online courses. Students increasingly regard the requirement to write examinations in pre-authorized examination centres as problematic and a source of frustration and expense. Moreover, process delays and administration costs associated with existing examination capabilities represent an increasing financial and reputational burden to the University over time.

### 1.1.2 Interfaces Program

The Interfaces Program encompasses investments aimed at renewing or establishing new capabilities related to the primary web-based interfaces users utilize for effective access to information, systems, services, and resources within the institution.

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$1,000,000
CIP Goals	Accessibility; Quality

**Program Development Goals:** This program has two primary goals. The first goal is to provide users (students, faculty, and staff) with intuitive and consistently designed interfaces to easily access the resources (e.g., information, systems, services) they require. This includes redesign and renewal of AU's student and staff portals. The second goal is to provide users with the capability and flexibility to access those resources via desktop and/or mobile computing platforms. This will require the

creation of a suite of mobile applications and the underlying ICT infrastructure to support effective access and security.

**Risk Statement:** The usability and effectiveness of interfaces are paramount to creating a quality user experience and maximizing efficiencies. Poor user experiences and the lack of required functionality can have a direct (and detrimental) impact on student and staff recruitment and retention. Robust and reliable interfaces are particularly important for a virtual organization like AU, whose users are served remotely and are reliant upon these interfaces to access AU’s online offerings. AU must also invest in mobile computing technologies as Web statistics and student comments clearly indicate a rise in mobile devices as users increasingly expect to be able to use their phones and tablets for anywhere, anytime access to AU resources.

### 1.1.3 Applications Suite: Student Service and Administration

The Student Service and Administration Program encompasses investments aimed at renewing or establishing new capabilities related to the suite of student service-oriented and/or administrative systems.

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$767,513
CIP Goals	Quality, Accountability

**Program Development Goals:** The emphasis of this program is to ensure the continued provision of quality student services. This will require significant investment in the implementation or renewal of a broad range of capabilities including content management, service management, Web publishing, social networking, and portfolio development. A key goal is to not only deliver these functions independently, but to make logical integrations among these systems to create a unified, service-oriented user experience. The second goal is to ensure these integrations are optimized for future scalability, adaptability, and performance. This is facilitated by implementing standards and removing redundant data sources or shadow systems, allowing AU’s suite of applications to respond effectively to change.

**Risk Statement:** AU prides itself on high student satisfaction rates. Unless its student service and administrative systems are renewed, AU will be unable to service students or provide for enrolment growth without disproportionately increasing overhead costs. Services to students and other stakeholders will be compromised, and AU will lose its competitive advantage in terms of price and quality of service, resulting in a significant reduction of the University’s market position.

### 1.1.4 Infrastructure Renewal

The Infrastructure Renewal Program encompasses investments aimed at ensuring the foundational infrastructure or utility layer (e.g., network, servers, storage, power) is capable of supporting AU’s technological requirements.

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$1,450,000
CIP Goals	Quality; Coordination

The Infrastructure Renewal Program encompasses investments aimed at ensuring the foundational infrastructure or utility layer (e.g., network, servers, storage, power) is not only capable of supporting AU’s technological requirements, but can also be leveraged to position AU’s infrastructure environment, robust data centre, and infrastructure human capital strength to provide heretofore non-existent services to public sector participants in northern Alberta. We believe this would also act as an incubator for private investments in technology for northern Alberta and position Athabasca as a hub for those investments.

### 1.1.5 Applications Suite: Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Program

Addresses projects aimed at renewing capabilities or establishing new capabilities related to the ERP suite and its related system modules (e.g., finance, human resources/payroll system, student information systems).

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$4,017,523
CIP Goals	Quality; Accountability

**Program Development Goals:** Efficient operations and planning are critical to AU’s ability to achieve the goals set forth in its *Strategic University Plan* and *ICT Strategic Plan* and, ultimately, its ability to provide a flexible, high-quality and innovative learning environment. AU has successfully implemented an ERP solution (Ellucian Banner) with the recent addition of finance and human resource/payroll modules to its existing student module. However, the student module is highly customized and out-of-date. These customizations were made years ago based on AU’s unique continuous enrolment business model but many of these functions have since been incorporated into the baseline versions of these products. AU requires capital investment to re-engineer business processes in parallel with returning our ERP to baseline and creating an interface layer to accommodate the features and functions that are still unique to AU’s business model and to integrate the ERP with other core systems to enable effective data collection, analytics, and reporting capabilities. Following the return to baseline project, AU also requires investment to enable the upgrade of our current version of Ellucian Banner to the next major release, as the programming language used in the current release will be at end-of-life as of December 2018.

**Risk Statement:** ERP systems are critical business enablers. Failure to invest in the ERP program risks inaccuracy and inefficiency in data collection and reporting. It also jeopardizes a broad range of business processes and sub-systems that are reliant on ERP data and functionality.

### 1.1.6 Infrastructure Operations Support

The Infrastructure Operations Support Program addresses projects aimed at ensuring effective business operations and continuity for all users across AU.

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$8,322,056
CIP Goals	Accessibility; Quality

**Program Development Goals:** The University has a dispersed staff and a distributed student body, and both require consistently performing systems to carry out their respective activities. The goal of this program is to provide the necessary support capabilities to ensure continuous operations. This includes investments to establish a high-availability computing environment (HACE), robust system monitoring capabilities, and standardized identity management, and to support continued expansion of the virtual desktop computing environment and disaster recovery capabilities for core critical systems. Of particular importance is ensuring that AU’s environment is kept secure, which will require significant investments in intrusion detection and protection technologies, and that security-related hardware is kept up-to-date.

**Risk Statement:** Monitoring the ICT infrastructure environment and intervening in a timely manner to ensure systems availability are critical ongoing activities. Without the supporting systems to ensure operational support, AU risks unauthorized access to information or loss of data, jeopardizing AU’s reputation and exposing the University to legal and/or regulatory consequences.

#### **1.1.7 EA Planning Program**

The EA Planning Program encompasses investments aimed at renewing or establishing new capabilities to better design, manage, and plan the online learning environment.

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$385,000
CIP Goals	Affordability; Accessibility; Quality

**Program Development Goals:** AU requires a comprehensive inventory and a living architectural design of its ICT assets. The scale, complexity, and diversity of the online environment requires the acquisition and implementation of EA technologies. EA technologies will facilitate mapping of existing strategic and operational processes to the underlying enabling technologies and infrastructural components that support their efficient development and delivery. Attaining an EA perspective is critical to establishing standards in an effort to reduce costs and to revealing vulnerabilities or deficiencies in processes, systems, and services. Of particular importance is attaining a clear understanding of how to best integrate the necessary components within the online environment to establish data collection and analytical capabilities.

**Risk Statement:** Establishing an EA framework and supporting technologies is critical to effective ICT investment planning, risk management, resource management, security management, and ensuring that AU’s EA is responsive to the ever-changing needs of the University community. The recommendation for AU to formalize “IT architecture standards to guide the University to develop common IT infrastructure that would reduce the University’s long-term IT operating costs” was noted in the 2010 report by the Auditor General of Alberta. In addition, Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education’s *ITM Control Framework* (2008) also recommended adoption of EA standards and controls.

## 1.2 Category III: Expansion or Replacement Projects: \$4,270,000

### 1.2.1 Analytical Platform Program

The Analytical Platform Program encompasses investments aimed at establishing data mining, analytics, and reporting capabilities to inform strategic and operational decision-making.

BLIMS Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$3,770,000
CIP Goals	Quality; Accountability

**Program Development Goals:** The analytical platform is the heart of an effective learning environment. Establishing a data warehouse and an operational data store, and aligning and integrating critical data sources of data, are foundational aspects to creating robust analytical capabilities. The analytical platform will facilitate data mining and the creation of student information and learning-content information warehouses or “hubs”. Analytical interfaces to these hubs will provide insights into course design and delivery identify student service improvements, and lay the groundwork for research. In particular, data collected about a learner’s ability to achieve learning outcomes can be used to adjust teaching resources or tactics to meet an individual’s learning needs. The analytical platform can also be used to collect information on knowledge gaps or skilled labour shortages across markets to inform the development of new courses or learning resources.

**Risk Statement:** If AU does not invest in its analytical platform it will not be able to collect critical data to enable effective and timely decision making to improve learner outcomes, maintain the quality of the educational opportunities provided by AU, and ensure AU is operating cost-effectively, given the service standards it strives to deliver.

### 1.2.2 Northern Alberta Shared Services Data Centre Study

The Northern Alberta Shared Services Data Centre program investments are aimed at establishing public cloud services and physical data centre services to the Northern Alberta public sector. This sector includes post-secondary institutions, municipal and county governments and public school systems.

BLIMS Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$500,000
CIP Goals	Coordination; Accessibility

**Program Development Goals:** To conduct a feasibility study and financial impact assessment to enable the deployment of shared data centre services and cloud expertise to the Northern Alberta public sector. A second goal is to leverage AU’s existing data centre and extensive technical depth and expertise in data centre management and cloud computing in a true shared service environment where all participants share costs equally and equitably.

**Risks:** The risks of not pursuing this initiative include increased costs for Northern Alberta public sector entities for the provision of technology services from commercial providers.

## Investing in AU's ICT Environment

AU's ICT vision and plan supports system coordination as it positions AU to offer cloud services to our partners in Northern Alberta, as well as manage AU's many services in a hybrid environment, distributing services into both private and public cloud offerings to maximize availability of services to our stakeholders, while achieving lower overall operational costs. This new environment also provides AU with the necessary elasticity of environments to enable us to expand and contract our technological footprint to provide the infrastructure components needed to effectively deliver research environments to enable pilots of new learning, analytical platforms, and engage with learners in new and innovative ways. An opportunity to provide shared services to northern Alberta is outlined below.

### *Northern Alberta Shared Services Data Centre Opportunity*

AU is uniquely positioned in the town of Athabasca, the gateway to Northern Alberta. The institution operates a Data Centre which was designed to accommodate hundreds of servers along with supporting equipment and a myriad of data storage devices. Over the course of the last 2 years, AU has aggressively pursued a modernization program to update its infrastructure capabilities leveraging 21st century technologies, specifically that of virtualization. To that end, AU has moved to a virtual first provisioning environment and has been actively moving server loads from physical servers to modern virtual server clusters. AU has also replaced its data storage devices with next generation Storage Area Network (SAN) storage, enabling virtual data storage provisioning, and the University is in the process of architecting a new network typology to utilize virtual networks as well as modern cyber security devices (IPS – Intrusion Prevention Systems, IDS – Intrusion Detection Systems, and DLP – Data Loss Prevention).

In effect, AU has created a Private Cloud environment within the AU Data Centre, and in so doing will be utilizing 70% less physical space by December 2017, along with corresponding reductions in electrical consumption and cooling requirements. This activity has created an opportunity for AU to provide shared data centre services to other post-secondary institutions in the northern region, as well as municipal, county and school boards, all of which are in need of, at the very least, disaster recovery capabilities. Due to our large footprint in the Athabasca region, the cloud expertise which AU's technical resources have acquired through our infrastructure program, the newly available physical space within our Data Centre and the capabilities inherent within a data centre designed and built to accommodate large volumes of computer equipment, we are uniquely positioned to offer a cost effective solutions to public organizations within the Northern Alberta region. To that end, we have entered into discussions with Athabasca County to provide disaster recovery capabilities, and have approached the Aspen View Public School to discuss providing data centre services.

In order to fully leverage this significant opportunity, AU is seeking \$500,000 from the Government of Alberta to conduct a feasibility study, as well as costs estimates, for the creations of a Northern Alberta Shared Services Data Centre. AU is uniquely positioned to execute this plan and possesses the necessary technical human capital to ensure its success.

## Facilities and Other Projects

Although AU's pedagogical platform is based on open and distance education, delivered largely via the Internet to students dispersed throughout Alberta, across Canada, and around the world, the University still requires physical facilities in order to carry out its student service, research, and administrative activities.

AU's Athabasca main campus, comprising 620 acres and constructed in 1983, is increasingly important to the Athabasca community and represents a significant economic benefit to northern Alberta as a whole. The University's location in northern Alberta presents it with opportunities that center on its facilities in the Town of Athabasca. As such, a key priority in the *Facilities Capital Plan* is the renewal and upgrading of its facilities to deal with aging infrastructure, to reflect current building codes and building management technologies, and to meet the demands of sustainable operations. Funding is required over the next five years in order to address the effects of 33 years of infrastructure degradation to ensure that our facilities continue to provide the physical infrastructure necessary to maintain the University's ability to serve its students. The additional facilities called for by this long-term capital plan, (i.e., development of a land and real estate management plan and acquisition of a consolidated site in the Greater Edmonton Area), will be directed towards supporting AU's academic plan and the objective of making better use of AU's financial resources.

AU is unique, not just because it is Canada's only public open, online and distance delivery post-secondary institution, but also because of its location, nestled in the Alberta boreal forest. The University's dramatic, sloped rural site integrates the Main Campus Building, the Academic and Research Centre (ARC), and the surrounding landscape, creating a beautiful setting for academic life. This setting includes a variety of trails and ravine-crossing bridges designed and built in 1982-83. Due to long exposure to the elements, they are badly in need of repair and upgrading for both safety and aesthetic reasons.

In addition to the seven buildings in Athabasca (Main Campus Building, ARC, AU House, Portable Office Complex, Tim Byrne Centre, and two observatories), AU leases two spaces in Edmonton and in one in Calgary. Despite the current economic slowdown, lease costs in major downtown urban centres are expected to rise over the coming 5 to 10 years. This has created a risk associated with AU's leaseholds in the greater Edmonton region. Pending the outcome of the development of the University academic master plan and the *Land and Real Estate Management Plan*, AU may be in search of an appropriate cost-effective consolidated space in the Greater Edmonton Area to ensure long-term continuity and sustainability of educational services to students. In the event of an ongoing need for space in the Greater Edmonton Area, a number of solutions can and will be reviewed, including an option that is consistent with AU's Calgary location. A Campus Alberta initiative resulted in AU's Calgary operation being relocated to the Bow Valley College South Campus building, which also houses tenants from University of Lethbridge, Olds College, and Bow Valley College. Other alternatives include, but are not limited to, renewal of lease space, securing alternative lease space, and undertaking a capital build. Regardless of the solution chosen, AU will explore long-term consolidated space solutions to allow for benefits of economies of scale and operational efficiencies

in accordance with the *Land and Real Estate Management Plan* and the space utilization projects noted below.

During the past year, the University was involved in a number of projects, largely focused on upgrading existing aging infrastructure, such as the following initiatives:

- Upgraded key electrical components of the Main Campus Building, including the main distribution panel and the motor control centres, and upgraded all main electrical cabling to allow for a more reliable and current electrical system. This project was funded by an IMP grant.
- Continued working toward resolution of deficiencies and performance of remedial work necessary to correct mechanical and electrical systems problems in the ARC.
- Completed major refurbishment of the chilling and cooling system in the Main Campus Building.
- Replaced the cooling tower and motors in the Main Campus Building.

Investment in facilities is a key to ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to

- enable learning and research
- accommodate growth
- be environmentally sustainable
- equip the University to participate in northern Alberta's growing economy
- be flexible and adaptive to evolving technology and networking
- provide spaces for collaborative activities and encourage collegiality and interaction
- meet current building code and building systems standards
- provide a hospitable work environment attractive to prospective employees
- promote wellness and social progress within the AU community, the Town and County of Athabasca, and Indigenous communities in the surrounding area.

In pursuit of these goals, the University requires significant funding to address deferred maintenance of main building systems and structures in order to prevent failures, as well as to develop its lands and physical assets and to create essential educational and research facilities.

An overview of facilities and other non-ICT capital projects planned for 2017-18 to 2021-22 is shown in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Facilities and Other Projects (Five-Year Capital Plan)**

	Estimated Facility and Other Projects Costs Per Fiscal Year					Program Totals
	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	
AU Main Campus Building Major Systems Upgrade	\$ 1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	\$ 7,500,000
AU Main Campus Internal Roads, Parking Lots and Trail	100,000	500,000	1,250,000	100,000	150,000	2,100,000
Library Collections	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	250,000
Equipment Renewal	230,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	830,000
Land and Real Estate Management	200,000	-	-	-	-	200,000
Athabasca Space Utilization Projects	250,000	-	-	-	-	250,000
Greater Edmonton Area Space Consolidation Solution	30,000	-	500,000	-	-	530,000
Development of Athabasca Lands	-	-	-	-	200,000	200,000
Solar Power Generation	10,000	1,500,000	-	-	-	1,510,000
Total 5 -Year Plan	<b>\$2,370,000</b>	<b>\$3,700,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,450,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,800,000</b>	<b>\$2,050,000</b>	<b>\$ 13,370,000</b>

**Table 6: Summary of Proposed Funding Sources for Facilities and Other Projects**

	Total	AU	Government
AU Main Campus Building Major Systems Upgrade	\$ 7,500,000	-	7,500,000
AU Main Campus Internal Roads, Parking Lots and Trail	2,100,000	-	2,100,000
Library Collections	250,000	250,000	-
Equipment Renewal	830,000	830,000	-
Land and Real Estate Management Plan	200,000	-	200,000
Athabasca Space Utilization Projects	250,000	250,000	-
Greater Edmonton Area Space Consolidation Solution	530,000	30,000	500,000
Development of Athabasca Lands	200,000	-	200,000
Solar Power Generation	1,510,000	-	1,510,000
Total 5 Year Plan	<b>\$ 13,370,000</b>	<b>\$1,360,000</b>	<b>\$ 12,010,000</b>

## 2.1 Category I: Preservation of Existing Facilities and Systems—Minor: \$10,680,000

### 2.1.1 AU Main Campus Building Major Systems Upgrade

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$7,500,000
CIP Goals	Accessibility; Accountability

The Main Campus Building is 33 years old, and many of its core structural and mechanical systems are based on original construction and installation. Although regular maintenance, repairs, and alterations have been carried out over the past three decades as required, dependent on funding availability, major deferred maintenance on main building systems and structures has not been significantly conducted to prevent future breakdowns, accommodate changes in technology, or ensure compliance with environmental, health and safety regulations or changes to the provincial building code. Given that the lifespan of many of these systems is 25 to 30 years, the building is fast approaching the point at which key mechanical and structural systems will need to be replaced to avert the risk of failure of heating, ventilating, and other structural or mechanical systems, including boilers, main HVAC units, cooling tower, glass roof system, and building envelope. Over the next 10 years, the rate of significant mechanical and structural systems failures is expected to increase as systems continue to age.

A February 2012 *Facility Assessment Report (FAR)* commissioned by Alberta Infrastructure identified a number of core systems that needed upgrading or replacement in the upcoming five years and estimated costs of necessary renovations at approximately \$8.5 million. Additionally, a report created by the University of Alberta in 2014 identified that \$2 million would be required in order to address deficiencies in the ARC.

Over a four-year period (2013-14 to 2016-17), the University received a total of \$3 million in IMP funding to address the identified \$10.5 million of building system upgrades needed. At present, \$7.5 million in building system upgrades are remaining to be completed. Funding is requested from the Government of Alberta to support the completion of this work in the five-year capital plan.

**Risk Statement:** Failure to bring Main Campus Building systems up to standard will result in increased exposure to legal liability, loss of capital investment value, significant increases in ongoing maintenance and operational costs, and weakening of the University's ability to provide a proper working environment to the approximately 300 employees based in Athabasca. Should the building deteriorate to the point that existing systems can no longer serve the University's technological and physical needs, AU would be unable to continue to provide educational services.

### 2.1.2 AU Main Campus Internal Roads, Parking Lots, Grounds, and Trails

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$2,100,000
CIP Goals	Accessibility; Accountability

The Athabasca main campus, landscaped using local vegetation and incorporating a portion of the 10-kilometre Muskeg Creek Trail, was developed when the Main Campus Building was constructed in the early 1980s. Due to wear and exposure to the elements, the grounds and the portion of the trail system crossing the University’s lands are badly in need of repair and upgrading for both safety and aesthetic reasons.

High use and the impact of the elements have led to significant deterioration of the internal roads, surface parking lots, and internal campus trail systems, creating a number of potential safety hazards. All are very much in need of an upgrade.

Through an agreement negotiated in 2014, AU entered into a land transfer agreement with the Town of Athabasca and Aspen View Public Schools, Division No. 78. Under this agreement, a new 1,000-student high school is being constructed adjacent to the University campus, as well as a new regional aquatic facility. These developments, expected to be completed in 2017-18, will further increase traffic and activity on University lands, increase wear and tear on already degraded internal roads and surfaces, and increase the need for remedial investment. To continue to allow safe access to and from the campus for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, especially given the expected addition of the new high school and regional aquatic facility, the road and parking lot base will have to be strengthened, asphalt top lift must be applied on all paved areas, and concrete work must be carried out to support large infrastructure systems. Funding is requested from the Government of Alberta to support the completion of this work in the five-year capital plan.

**Risk Statement:** Failure to enhance trails and walkways will result in degradation of the campus in terms of both aesthetics and safety. Hazards to personal safety due to unsafe walkways, parking surfaces, and access roads will likely result in increased personal injury incidents and loss of employee time and increased medical benefits costs. Accidental injuries and inadequate wheelchair access will expose the University to a risk of litigation.

**2.1.3 Library Collections**

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$250,000
CIP Goals	Quality; Accessibility

Major development of AU’s digital repository is planned to increase the depth and breadth of online reference works and on-site collections. This development will include acquisition of a deep archive of online journal backfiles to meet the digital reference demands of students and to support learning and research.

**Risk Statement:** If AU does not meet the digital reference demands of its students and the research needs of its faculty members, it will lose its competitive position and risk losing market share of students and revenue.

### 2.1.4 Equipment Renewal

BLIMS Category	I
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$830,000
CIP Goals	Accountability

The University maintains equipment and vehicles that support its core facilities, operations, and research. In recent years, funding has not been provided for the replacement and upgrade of equipment and vehicles and, as such, the University is incurring increased maintenance costs and greater downtime associated with the aging of these assets. Funding in the amount of \$830,000 is requested over the next five years for the replacement of these items.

**Risk Statement:** Failure to renew equipment in a timely fashion would keep obsolete equipment in use, resulting in non-compliance with standards of practice and workplace health and safety requirements.

### 2.2 Category III: Expansion or Replacement Projects: \$2,690,000

AU owns real property assets, including approximately 620 acres of land in the Athabasca area. This includes 600 acres adjacent to the existing AU campus, as well as 15.5 acres in the centre of Athabasca that were acquired in 2016 as part of a land transfer agreement with the Aspen View School Division.

The University currently maintains 212,500 sq. ft. of owned building spaces, comprising seven buildings in the Athabasca area, including the Main Campus Building, the ARC, the Tim Byrne Centre (TBC), the Portable Office Complex (POC), AU House, and the two Geophysical Observatory buildings. In addition, the University leases 53,685 sq. ft. of office, meeting room, and classroom space in two locations in Edmonton (45,045 sq. ft.) and one location in Calgary (8,640 sq. ft.).

It is key to achieving its mandate that the University has effective and efficient facilities in place that address operational and service requirements and that optimize the potential of its land holdings. This capital plan outlines short-, mid- and long-term initiatives that support the University in achieving this goal and emphasizes the need to update its long-term *Land and Real Estate Management Plan*.

#### 2.2.1 Land and Real Estate Management Plan

BLIM Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$200,000
CIP Goals	Accountability

AU prepared a *Campus Development Plan* in 2006 to address its changing needs and to provide a planning framework that would assist in accommodating growth and development over the next 25 years. The *Campus Development Plan* applies to the AU Central Campus, as well as its requirements in the Greater Edmonton Area and Calgary.

In spring 2014, AU initiated a land and real estate management planning effort and retained a consortium consultant to undertake the updating of the previous 25-year long-range plan for the University’s land holdings. A long-term strategic vision for the development of these lands will benefit the University, in terms of generating revenue from them, as well as the surrounding community. Any decision on development of the lands will be part of a comprehensive plan geared to meet future educational, social, environmental, and technological challenges.

The consultant initiated the work in the fall of 2014, and completed information gathering and preliminary consultations and assessment. At the end of 2014, in preparation for the upcoming fiscal budget, and given AU’s financial circumstances and other more pressing student-facing budget priorities, the project was put on hold subject to future availability of funds. The consultant provided the University with a preliminary report of work to date, which will serve as a starting point for continuation of the project.

It is necessary for planning purposes and as a government requirement that the University have an updated *Land and Real Estate Management Plan* to accommodate new ideas and directions proposed for AU and its campuses. Internal funding is not available to complete this long-term planning. The University is requesting that \$200,000 in funding by the Government of Alberta be provided to enable the University to complete this initiative.

As the University undertakes the process of updating its *Land and Real Estate Management Plan*, action will be taken with respect to initiatives that are still relevant from the 2006 *Campus Development Plan* and the 2014 preliminary report provided by the land development consultant, as well as other initiatives that will enable the University to make efficient and effective use of its land and property holdings. This includes the following projects, which are further expanded upon below:

- TBC—relocation of operations currently occupying the property
- POC—revenue generation from unoccupied space
- AU House—revenue generation from unoccupied space
- Greater Edmonton Area—consolidation of existing operations
- Development of vacant lands

**Risk Statement:** If the work to carry out the development of a *Land and Real Estate Management Plan* is not undertaken, the University will not be in a position to optimize the potential that exists from strategic use of its land holdings.

### Short Term (1-2 years)

#### 2.2.2 Athabasca Space Utilization Projects

BLIM Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$250,000
CIP Goals	Accountability

### ***Tim Byrne Centre (TBC)***

The University purchased the TBC in 2000 and since that time the site has been dedicated to supporting the University's operations for housing and distribution of learning resources, largely textbooks and course materials. The TBC is located on 5.9 acres on the main commercial thoroughfare at the gateway into the Town of Athabasca. It consists of two buildings totalling 19,300 sq. ft. of office and warehouse space, as well as a large yard. Over the past decade, the University has been engaged in a strategic process of converting course learning resources to electronic format, resulting in a significant reduction of the need for physical space to house such operations. Given the pace of digitalization in general in the last few years, the University anticipates that the need for the physical space requirements related to learning resource materials will be further reduced in the future.

While the physical space requirements for learning resource materials will not be eliminated, in order to ensure the most effective and efficient use of space the University is assessing its requirements with respect to the TBC. Based upon a preliminary assessment, it has been determined that a partial or full relocation of the operations currently located in the TBC to the AU Central Campus is possible. While there are questions that would need to be addressed and many details to be worked out, it is felt that there is potential to make a full or partial move. Relocation would require a further review of certain operations related to advancement and student services, as well as a purging of unnecessary materials, supplies, fixtures, and equipment that are currently stored at both locations in order to make efficient use of space. Additionally, it would be necessary to undertake renovations in the AU Main Campus Building to provide suitable workspace. This would consist primarily of the removal of non-structural walls to open up the area at the back of the building. At this point, the cost to undertake the anticipated renovations is unknown; however, a very rough guess is approximately \$250,000. The funding to cover the cost of the renovation would be generated from alternative use or disposal of the TBC space.

A decision on the future of the TBC will be dependent upon a further assessment of AU's operational requirements and the degree to which renovations at the AU Main Campus Building can be configured to enable a full or partial relocation. Once the University has more information with respect to its requirements for space at the TBC, options will be further explored with respect to the property and presented to the Board of Governors for consideration.

### ***Portable Office Complex (POC)***

The POC was purchased in early 2006, due to existing space challenges at the time (5000 sq. ft. of office and meeting space). The POC is located on the AU Central Campus in Athabasca. Since its acquisition, the POC has served a variety of purposes, from ICT ad-hoc project space, to temporary office quarters while spaces were being renovated in the main building. The space is currently unoccupied and, given that there is vacant space in the other buildings on the campus, it is not anticipated that there will be a need for the POC in the short term. The plan is to pursue tenants that might be interested in leasing the property. The success of this initiative may be impacted by current economic conditions and their effect on the Athabasca market, as there are at present a number of vacant office spaces in the town available for lease. A review of current listings for leased property in Athabasca indicates a lease rate between \$14.00 and \$16.78 per sq. ft. Based upon an average of \$15.40 per sq. ft., the projected leased revenue would be approximately \$77,000 annually.

### **AU House**

In the early 1980s when the University relocated to Athabasca, a decision was made to purchase a residence for the University president. The residence was intended to double as an important social gathering place, and a focal point for both the AU community and the town community in general. Since 2014, AU house has largely remained unoccupied. It has been rented for the period May-October for the past two years to Villanova University, who send a team of graduate students to northern Alberta for the four months of summer to study the ecology of northern Alberta peat bogs. The \$28,000 rental income generated through this lease is sufficient to cover the annual operating expenses, which are approximately \$21,000, but it does not cover required expenditures related to the maintenance of a house that is over 30 years old. In light of the fact that, with the exception of the continued seasonal four-month rental to Villanova University each year the property is anticipated to remain vacant for the next four to eight years, the University will continue exploring options for the use of the property.

**Risk Statement:** The risks associated with not moving forward with a review of the current space requirements with respect to these properties are financial and operational. Failure to undertake this initiative will result in the University continuing to incur direct and indirect costs, as well as the operational complexity and administrative requirements, associated with the operation of these buildings.

### **Medium Term (3-5 Years)**

#### **2.2.3 Greater Edmonton Area Space Consolidation Solution**

BLIM Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$530,000
CIP Goals	Accessibility; Quality; Accountability

AU's Edmonton locations consist of 2,542 m<sup>2</sup> of space in the Peace Hills Trust Building in downtown Edmonton, and 1,625 m<sup>2</sup> at the Trail Business Centre in northwest Edmonton, at an annual lease cost of \$720,000. The current leases have been aligned to expire in 2020. For the past decade, the University has been exploring options for consolidating its space requirements in the Greater Edmonton Area into one longer-term, integrated learning centre of approximately 4650 m<sup>2</sup>. The expected benefits of this project include:

- improving student access to registration, examination, and career counselling services
- enhancing AU's presence in the Greater Edmonton Area
- increasing opportunities for research and teaching collaboration with other Edmonton-based post-secondary institutions
- improving the working environment and support for Edmonton area-based AU employees
- reducing operating expenses attributable to the continually increasing rental rates and location changes associated with occupancy of leased space.

However, to date no suitable location and scenario has materialized to realize this objective. Challenges include finding a suitable location and availability of financial resources. The University is continuing to seek potential partners and possible creative arrangements, including partnership

opportunities with other public and not-for-profit entities and other post-secondary institutions, with respect to a space consolidation solution that will allow the University to streamline its Edmonton-based operations. While consolidation has been a longer-term strategy for AU, the ultimate solution for the Greater Edmonton Area will be guided by the *Independent Third-Party Review* and the strategic planning process. The initiatives described below are based on the premise of replacement space and do not take into consideration a shift in strategy from consolidation.

The University has been strategic in aligning its current leases to expire on April 30, 2020. However, there is much to be done between now and then in order for the University to commence service delivery and operations from a consolidated space in May 2020. It is therefore important that the University conclude its consultation, planning, decision-making, and approval processes, as well as complete the necessary construction or renovations/leasehold improvements to configure the space to meet the University’s requirements, such that occupancy can occur for May 1, 2020. It is estimated that renovation/leasehold improvement costs of approximately \$500,000 (\$108 per m<sup>2</sup>) would be incurred in 2019-20.

At this stage the University is open to consider arrangements that will enable it to achieve the anticipated benefits of consolidation. In order to meet the desired timeline, it is proposed that in 2017-18 the University engage with a consultant to undertake a needs assessment to determine the University’s Greater Edmonton Area space requirements and identify specific options. The consultant is anticipated to cost \$30,000, which would be internally funded.

**Risk Statement:** There are two primary categories of risk associated with not moving forward with a consolidated owned space: those related to continuing to lease; and those related to not consolidating the operations into one location. Continuing to secure space through leasing arrangements affects the University’s ability to make long-term plans, as the risk of relocation occurs at the end of each lease term. Additionally, there is financial risk related to the uncertainty associated with lease expenses, which are tied to market conditions at the end of each lease term. In addition, if the University is unable to consolidate operations there is operational risk associated with not being able to leverage the synergy that exists through the sharing of knowledge and face-to-face collaboration as well as the operational efficiency that is possible with having only one location.

### Long Term (5-10 years)

#### 2.2.5 Development of Athabasca Lands

BLIM Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$200,000
CIP Goals	Accountability

AU has significant remaining land holdings (more than 600 acres) adjacent to the existing campus. Approximately 247 acres of the remaining land have no or limited constraints on future development and are designated by the Town of Athabasca as fully developable. These lands are therefore surplus to the University’s requirements.

Through the Land Transfer Agreement between the University, Aspen View Public School Division, and the Town of Athabasca, the University owns 5.5 acres in the centre of town that is the site of the

current high school. Upon vacating the site in 2018, the School Division is responsible for the demolition of the existing building and the environmental cleanup of the site. Given the location of this newly acquired land adjacent to a residential area, it is anticipated that the University will realize benefits from its long-term development potential.

Additionally, the University views the construction of the new high school and aquatic facility adjacent to the Athabasca campus as a catalyst to the initiation of future institutional development on its lands. It is anticipated these projects will result in an increase in the development potential and value of the University's additional remaining lands (currently vacant farmland) surrounding this site. In order to maximize the economic benefit associated with the development of these lands it is requested that \$200,000 in funding be provided to cover the cost associated with conducting a development feasibility study and planning.

### **2.2.2 Climate Change Initiative—Solar Power Generation**

BLIM Category	III
Five-Year Estimated Cost	\$ 1,510,000
CIP Goals	Accountability

As a public entity, in response to the Government of Alberta's *Climate Leadership Plan*, AU is identifying strategies that will result in the reduction of carbon emissions. AU's plan is to explore future technologies to make the University a more sustainable place. At the current time, AU is not engaged in the use of alternative energy, but the implementation of a solar plan at the University could be economically beneficial for all Albertans. The cost of implementing solar panels is declining and is becoming more feasible as a cleaner way of obtaining a source of energy. This alternative energy source could produce substantial annual savings. With the push towards sustainability and the need to reduce greenhouse gases, solar energy installations on campus are worth the investment.

Costs have deterred funding for projects in the past, but now there is an option that AU could avail itself of—funding through Alberta's *Climate Leadership Plan*. If obtained, the grant would provide funding for installation and maintenance of solar panels and associated equipment.

A first step is to perform a solar power feasibility study to fully assess solar power as an option for the University. It is proposed that in 2017-18 AU engage a consultant at an estimated cost of \$10,000 to undertake the study. The results of this study will provide an estimate of the capital costs associated with moving forward.