

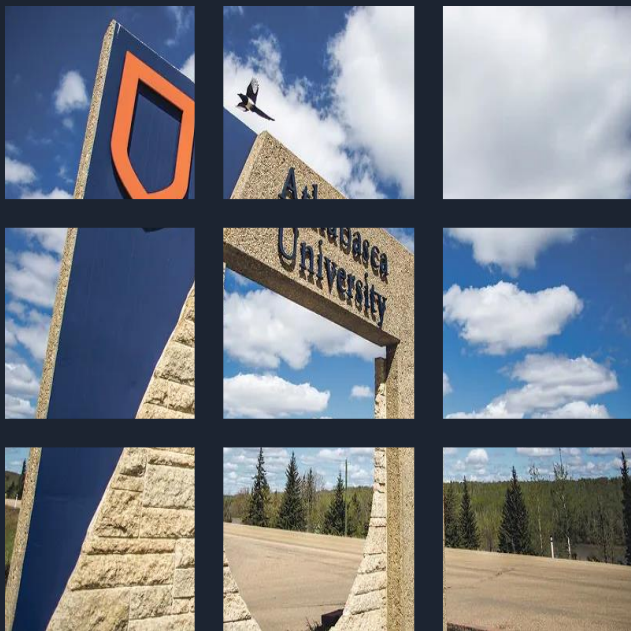
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Candidate Brief

Athabasca University

Dean, Faculty of Business

May 2026



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About Athabasca University

Athabasca University respectfully acknowledges that we live and work on the Traditional Lands of the Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit, Métis) of Canada. We honour the ancestry, heritage, and gifts of the Indigenous Peoples and give thanks to them.

Guided by [Like No Other](#), Athabasca University's (AU) strategic plan, AU's approach to accessible yet transformative education and research is truly distinctive. Our academic mission is to remove barriers to post-secondary education for learners, regardless of their age, location, career, or educational background.

Based in the beautiful region of Athabasca, Alberta, AU is one of four Comprehensive Academic and Research Universities (CARUs) in the province. We are a public, board-governed, open, and online university serving more than 37,000 students across Alberta, Canada, and around the world.

AU seeks to be an agile and inclusive workplace in which all team members can grow, make their highest contribution, and each make a difference to our academic vision and mission.

Led by President Dr. Alex Clark, AU is embarking on an exciting new chapter. Drawing from five decades of growth in distance and online education, we aim to grow our position as Canada's foremost innovator in flexible, online and accessible learning. With an inclusive Senior Leadership Team dedicated to empowering every team member to contribute, learn and thrive, AU stands poised for an exciting and ambitious next stage of development.

A university like no other for people like no other
Athabasca University (AU) has widened access and increased opportunity to higher education for over 50 years for everyone by providing access to high-quality university education and professional development for students by removing physical, digital and systemic barriers to learning and success.

An open and online university, AU is a unique hybrid workplace with more than 1300 staff working across five faculties and six portfolios. From AU's home on the Indigenous lands of Treaty 6, Treaty 8 and Metis Northern Alberta, we are Alberta's only rurally-situated university with:

- Over 37,000 students across five faculties—with 33,000 undergraduates and 4,000 graduate students
- 900 courses over 70 programs—with choices from micro-credential and baccalaureate to masters and doctoral levels
- Some of the country's most well established and largest accredited academic and professional programs in business, registered nurse and nurse practitioner programs, science, and humanities & social sciences
- 560,000 alumni across 101 countries

As Alberta and Canada's premier and largest online university, AU's commitment to widening access and participation has been consolidated under its current [Like No Other Strategic Plan](#), which focuses on fostering a better and more equitable world via teaching, research, and impact in place and digital space.

Under the Like No Other plan, AU seeks to be a trust- and team-oriented workplace focused on quality and innovation in which everyone is respected authentically and is and feels welcome.

Putting our learners at the centre, AU seeks to reduce barriers to access, build opportunities for growth, and foster community and connection while integrating equity,



diversity and inclusion, Indigenous conciliation, and transformative systems across our activities and impacts.

AU's centre for Indigenous peoples and communities, Nukskahtowin (or "Meeting Place"), is a welcoming place for all people and ideas to come together. Since 2001, the main goal has been to recognize and develop traditional Indigenous knowledge and to support, protect, and keep Indigenous knowledge, education, and oral traditions strong. After the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we renewed our commitment to all forms of Indigeneity at AU.

Acting from values, AU is committed in our systems and practices to working together to create a respectful, safe, and healthy environment in which to work and learn. The university, staff and students share the responsibility of creating and fostering a safe, healthy, and respectful working and learning environment.

AU seeks to be and build a welcoming community and connection in place and digital space. Throughout the year, AU has a range of in-person, hybrid, and online activities that span working, team meetings, retreats, and staff celebrations. AU's campus in Athabasca has been modernized over the past years to create an attractive and inclusive workplace for all people and teams with capacity for small to large gatherings and hybrid events, as well as portfolio, faculty, and organization-wide professional development, retreats, and celebrations. With onsite library, laboratory and makerspace facilities for staff and students, AU seeks to build culture and community throughout the year through a program of staff professional development and recreational activities.

Considerations in applying

A hybrid workplace, AU encourages applications from all eligible candidates—women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, persons of any gender identity and expression, and members of equity-deserving groups are encouraged to apply.

AU is committed to fostering an inclusive, accessible workplace and learning environment that supports students and staff with disabilities, aiming to remove social, physical, and technological barriers. We welcome and encourage applications from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process. We are committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for all candidates. If you require accommodation at any stage of the recruitment process, please contact hrca@athabascau.ca.

AU recognizes that life circumstances such as illness, disability, family and community responsibilities (e.g., maternity leave, parental leave, leaves due to illness) are expected to have an impact on any candidate's record of achievement. These impacts should be taken into consideration during the hiring process.

Athabasca First

Wherever possible, AU seeks to attract and hire qualified team members to reside in the Athabasca region of Alberta, Canada. We will offer relocation assistance for the right candidate should you decide to relocate to Athabasca. As a resident of the town or county of Athabasca, you can choose to work on and from our beautiful campus in Athabasca. To discover the Town and Region of Athabasca, go to: [Visit Athabasca](#)



Faculty of Business

Accredited by AACSB, Athabasca University's Faculty of Business is recognized as a global leader in online business education, delivering flexible, high-quality programming designed to meet the needs of today's fast-paced and globally connected business environment. As Canada's open university, AU provides fully online and accessible learning pathways, enabling students to pursue undergraduate and graduate business degrees from anywhere in the world and on schedules that align with work and personal commitments.

The Faculty of Business is distinguished by its academically rigorous and industry-relevant curriculum. Courses are developed and taught by leading scholars and business practitioners, ensuring learners gain practical, applied skills that directly support professional growth. The faculty offers a broad suite of programs designed to support emerging leaders as well as seasoned professionals seeking career advancement or specialized competencies:

Undergraduate certificates and degrees

- University Certificate in Accounting
- University Certificate in Advanced Accounting
- University Certificate in Computers and Management Information Systems
- Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.) (with majors in accounting, business technology management, finance, human resources management, Indigenous business and marketing)
- Bachelor of Management (B.Mgmt.)

Graduate programs

- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) (Canada's first online DBA)
- Graduate Diploma in Management (stand-alone or Phase 1 of the MBA)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA) (world's first fully online MBA)
- MBA Partnership Pathways:
 - MBA for Accountants
 - MBA for Health Leaders
 - MBA for Supply Chain Managers
- Forthcoming:
 - Master in Management (MiM) – laddering certificate, diploma and masters' program for early career managers

The Faculty maintains several respected accreditations that enhance the credibility and professional value of its programs. Notably, its Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Management degrees are accredited by Chartered Professionals in Human Resources (CPHR) Canada, supporting graduates in meeting recognized HR industry standards. In 2022, the faculty also earned AACSB accreditation, placing it among fewer than 6% of business schools worldwide to achieve this distinction.

In addition to its academic offerings, the Faculty of Business is strongly committed to impactful, multidisciplinary research that advances business knowledge and addresses real-world organizational challenges. Faculty members conduct research across areas such as online management education, digital disruption, ethics, sustainability, accounting innovation, economics, marketing, entrepreneurship, information systems, and organizational culture and change. Supported by



significant external funding from organizations including SSHRC, the Bank of Canada, FQRSC, and the CPA Education Foundation, this research enables the faculty to collaborate with commercial, nonprofit, and academic partners both in Canada and internationally.

Complementing its research strength, the Faculty also fosters strong practitioner engagement through its Executive in Residence program to support entrepreneurial thinking and provide practical insights that bridge academic learning with real-world business practice. Students additionally benefit from robust learner support, dedicated faculty engagement, and access to tools, resources and research activities within a strong academic community. This environment – grounded in flexibility, accessibility, and excellence - makes the Faculty of Business a premier destination for individuals pursuing meaningful and career-advancing business education.



The Opportunity

Reporting to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, the Dean of the Faculty of Business is responsible for the leadership and administration of all aspects of the Faculty's operations. As the face of the Faculty and an institutional leader, the Dean will work collaboratively with other deans, VPs, faculty members, staff, instructors and students to imagine its future, to articulate a vision, and to develop a sound strategy in pursuit of its goals – one that is aligned with AU's Like No Other Strategic Plan and forthcoming academic plan.

The Dean has an outstanding opportunity to build on the Faculty's successes to support new programming and the Faculty's flourishing research profile, nurture collaboration between disciplines, advance equity, diversity, and inclusion, and foster existing and new relationships with internal and external interest holders including other Faculties, portfolios and units at AU and with industry, communities, universities and alumni. The Dean will lead a diverse team of Associate Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, Administrators and Coordinators.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Leadership & Strategic Direction

- Provide strong and collaborative academic leadership, working closely with Associate Deans, Directors, and Chairs to ensure high-quality program delivery and a supportive environment for faculty and staff.
- Lead the ongoing refinement of the Faculty of Business's vision and strategic priorities, ensuring alignment with Athabasca University's Like No Other Strategic Plan and its mandate as Canada's Open University.
- Champion excellence in teaching, research, and service, fostering a culture of innovation, continuous improvement, and pedagogical leadership in an online and digitally enabled learning environment.

Program Development & Quality Assurance

- Continuously evaluate and update existing academic programs and oversee the development of new, market-responsive programs that meet the evolving needs of learners and industry - across undergraduate, graduate, and professional development levels.
- Ensure that programs reflect current scholarship, emerging business trends, Indigenous perspectives, and

AU's commitment to accessible, flexible, and high-quality online education.

- Oversee program review processes, learning outcome assessments, and curriculum development to sustain and enhance academic rigor and relevance.

Faculty Recruitment, Development & Inclusion

- Develop and implement effective strategies for the recruitment, retention, development, and succession planning of faculty and academic leaders, ensuring alignment with Faculty goals, advancing academic excellence and AU's commitment to access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Model inclusive leadership practices and advance initiatives that strengthen diversity and equitable access across teaching, research, and administrative operations.

Research Leadership & Funding Growth

- Support and expand the Faculty's multidisciplinary research activities, fostering the growth of a strong research culture, that encourages faculty and students to pursue impactful research.



- Cultivate new research partnerships with industry, communities, and academic institutions nationally and internationally.
- Encourage and support faculty in securing external research funding and grants, advancing the Faculty's profile as a high impact, research-intensive culture.

Interdisciplinary & Institutional Collaboration

- Lead and enhance interdisciplinary initiatives across the Faculty of Business and in collaboration with other AU faculties, supporting innovative cross-faculty programming and research.
- Actively engage as a key member of the University's senior leadership team, collaborating with the President, Vice-Presidents, Deans, and governance bodies to advance the University's mission and strategic priorities.

Accreditation & Academic Standards

- Serve as the Faculty's lead advocate in all accreditation processes, including ongoing maintenance of AACSB accreditation and alignment with professional bodies such as CPHR Canada.
- Ensure programs meet or exceed accreditation requirements, support continuous improvement processes, and maintain strong relationships with accreditation agencies and professional associations.

Financial & Operational Stewardship

- Provide strategic oversight of the Faculty's budget, resource allocation, and administrative operations,

ensuring effective stewardship within a unionized, distributed work environment.

- Oversee faculty relations and human resource matters with fairness, transparency, and accountability.

Student Success & Learning Experience

- Champion a learner-centered culture, ensuring that online academic programs are supported by high-quality learner services, advising, and accessible resources.
- Collaborate with student support units across the university to enhance retention, engagement, and success for learners at all levels and across diverse backgrounds.
- Support initiatives that strengthen experiential learning, work-integrated learning, mentorship, and professional development opportunities.

External Relations, Partnerships & Advancement

- Build and sustain strong relationships with institutional, industry, community, and provincial and national partners that support the Faculty's academic, research, and outreach goals.
- Represent the Faculty of Business in external forums, promoting its strengths in online business education, research excellence, and industry relevance.
- Participate in fundraising, donor stewardship, alumni engagement, and community outreach to advance the University's and the Faculty's visibility and strategic objectives.



The Individual

The successful candidate will bring outstanding academic qualifications, a record of scholarly achievement and excellence, administrative experience, and leadership as well as a passion for advancing access to business education. While the Search Committee recognizes that no one candidate is likely to meet the following qualifications in equal measure, they are preferred and will be used in the assessment of candidates for the position:

QUALIFICATIONS

- PhD in a discipline relevant to business and management, with a strong record of scholarly achievement in accordance with appointment as full professor.
- Proven senior administrative leadership experience in a complex university environment.
- Demonstrated understanding of, and sensitivity to, diverse academic and organizational cultures of an open and distributed university.
- A collaborative, participatory leadership style with the ability to build strong relationships with faculty, staff, students, and external partners, fostering a culture of professional growth and continuous improvement.
- Proven strategic leadership skills, including the ability to listen, engage, and inspire faculty and staff around shared goals while supporting innovation in an online learning context.
- Strong interpersonal and team-building skills, with success collaborating across faculties, industry partners, community organizations, donors, alumni, and government stakeholders.
- Excellent communication skills, with the ability to articulate vision and decisions clearly, listen actively, and serve as an effective internal and external advocate for the Faculty of Business.
- Demonstrated ability to manage financial and human resources responsibly, including transparent and sustainable budgeting practices in a distributed (remote) and unionized environment.
- Deep commitment to access, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging, with a record of addressing inequities and integrating inclusive practices into academic and administrative leadership.
- Demonstrated commitment to promoting Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation, with a commitment to incorporating Indigenous knowledge and approaches into programs and institutional priorities.
- Experience in advancement, fundraising, and donor stewardship, with an understanding of how external engagement and alumni relations contribute to institutional growth.
- Commitment to excellence in teaching, online pedagogy, and learner-centered education, with the ability to champion the full range of business disciplines offered at AU.
- Strong research profile and a passion for fostering research productivity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovation across faculty and student research activities.



- Ability to build and sustain external partnerships - advancing the Faculty's academic, research, and community-engagement objectives.
- Commitment to high standards in research, teaching, and service, with a focus on supporting the development of faculty, staff, instructors, and students in all aspects of academic and leadership growth.
- Strong problem-solving, analytical, planning and organizational skills.

LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES

- Integrity and self-awareness, and the ability to exercise sound judgement and diplomacy in all situations.
- Approachable, calm, and thoughtful, with a growth mindset that actively listens and welcomes feedback.
- Relationship-focused and results-oriented, fostering strong collaboration.
- Decisive yet collegial, and encourages diverse perspectives and inclusive dialogue.
- Fair, ethical, transparent, and inclusive.



Additional Information

KEY DATES

Consideration of candidates will begin immediately, and review of applications will begin in early May and continue until the position is filled.

The anticipated start date is **September 1, 2026**, though timing may be negotiated based on the successful candidate's circumstances.

To apply, please submit a comprehensive resume along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria.

The preferred method of application is online at: <https://careers.odgers.com/en-ca/31163>.

If you require accommodations to participate in the recruitment process, please inform Odgers at aubusinessdean@odgers.com.

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

At Odgers, we have always respected the privacy and the confidentiality of the personal information provided to us in context with our executive search assignments. This has been a fundamental value in building trust with our candidates and clients. We are committed to keeping your information secure and managing it in accordance with our legal responsibilities wherever we operate in the world, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act ("PIPEDA") in Canada.

For more information on your rights and to find out more about how we process your personal data, a copy of our Privacy Policy is available for your review on our [website](#).

By providing us with a copy of your resume and any subsequent personal information directly or from third parties on your behalf such as references, you understand that it has been furnished with your consent for the purpose of possible disclosure to our client, who has agreed to comply with our Privacy Policy. We will not disclose your personal information to clients without your prior knowledge and consent.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Odgers is deeply committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all the work that we do. As part of our efforts to better understand our ability to reach as broad a pool of candidates as possible for our searches, our DEI team would like to encourage you to take a moment and access our [Self-Declaration Form](#).



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