

# Departmental Association **HANDBOOK**



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# About Departmental Associations

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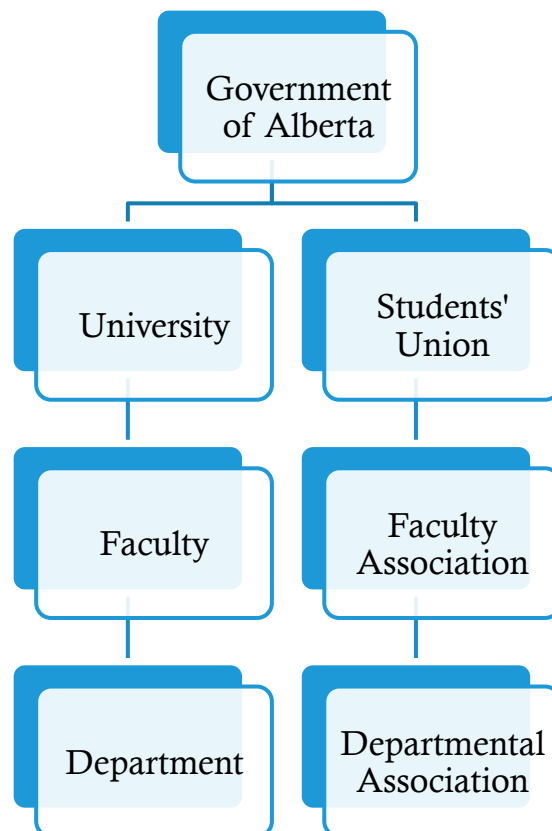
## Overview

Student Departmental Associations are regulated at three levels: there is legislation regarding them in General Faculties Council Legislation, in Students' Union Bylaw, as well as in individual Faculty Associations' Constitutions or Bylaws. However, since not all faculties have Departmental Associations, not all Faculty Associations have legislation regarding them.

Departmental associations represent students registered in academic programs within their faculty. They advocate and plan events for their students. As of 2016, Discover Governance has identified 64 clubs or associations with departments of study on campus. Due to the high number and diversity of students in their faculties, Faculty Associations often need to consult with Departmental Associations before advocating for an initiative.

## Organizational Chart

This is how DAs fit into the governance system.



### ***Authoritative Relationships***

The SU delegates advocacy powers to the Faculty Associations, and your FA delegates its advocacy powers on to you. This is where you get your legitimacy as an advocacy organization, and as such you are subject to your FAs rules and regulations.

The University has authority over your DA as a student group through the Dean of Students, and has the power to impose requirements on your group, approve or disapprove events held on its property or in its name, and revoke from you the privilege of using its name and insignia and using its property and insurance coverage.

### ***Representative Relationships***

DAs represent students to their department and appoint students to the Department Council. They also advocate for their members to FAs, and to the SU when necessary.

### ***Oversight Relationship***

Student Group Services, a service run by the Students' Union, provides administrative assistance to the Dean of Students when it comes to registration and general oversight of student groups. They are there to help you be as successful as possible, but sometimes they also must enforce rules and rulings handed down by the Dean of Students.

## **The Relationship Between FAs and DAs**

While Faculty Associations sit above Departmental Associations in an authoritative sense, the relationship between FAs and DAs is also one of assistance and communication. There is an expectation that FAs will assist DAs in terms of advocacy and providing services to students, and that DAs will remain open and maintain an ongoing relationship with the FA. If DAs are uncommunicative with their overseeing FA, then the FA may not be able to complete its reporting requirements to the SU. If FAs are unsupportive, students in particular departments may not be adequately represented.

For as long as the department of Discover Governance has existed there has only been one instance of a Faculty Association putting a Departmental Association on probation. The procedure that was followed was analogous to the procedure that is followed when the SU puts an FA on probation.

OASIS and ISSS are unique in that they have specific portfolios on their executives to liaise with Departmental Associations. This does not mean the DAs in other faculties are inactive or uncoordinated, however. For example, the engineering DAs collaborate each year on Geer Week activities and prior to 2013, the presidents of DAs in the faculty of ALES comprised the membership of the ALES FA.

# Transition

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You've just entered into a representative role for which you're received little or no training or transition and you don't know what you're doing. Now what?

## Five Things You Should Do at the Beginning of Your Term

### **1 Read your constitution**

This document should be in your office in a hard copy, and probably a digital copy on the office computer. If you can't find it there, check your group's website or BearsDen.

### **2 Make a list**

From this information, make a list of everything you are expected to do in your position and briefly think about or even write down how you will go about fulfilling those expectations. If you are unsure of how to do this or where to start, pick one of the aspects of running a departmental association in the attached flow charts and go through the steps of preparing for the upcoming year.

### **3 Again, but with your Policy Manual**

Do the previous two things, but this time with your policy manual if you have one. Keep in mind that policy manuals tend to be longer and more detailed, but do not need to be followed as closely. Bylaws must be adhered to at all times, but policy is a little easier to adapt where necessary. It is more of a general guideline for how everyday business should be conducted than a strict law. If you are ever unsure about how to deal with a piece of everyday business, such as making a bank deposit, check your policy manual first.

### **4 Meet with your executives**

Meet with your executives to talk about your role and theirs, what is expected throughout the year, what kinds of goals you want to work towards, etc. Make sure everyone on the board is clear about your organizational goals for the year and how you intend to achieve them.

### **5 Set some goals**

Create your own set of goals and expectations you have in your position, making sure they align more or less with the goals and expectations of the entire board, and write out a plan of how you intend to meet those goals and expectations.

## Transition Checklists

Pick a page that is relevant to you and, starting from the top, answer the questions until you are finished.

## ADMINISTRATION

1. Are you responsible for general meetings?

No – Proceed to number 2!

Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on general meetings and your position duties.

Yes

Do you know what to do?

Yes – You got this! Proceed to number 2!

No – Check your bylaws/policy or contact Discover Governance.

2. Do you chair any committees or other meetings?

No – Proceed to number 3!

Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on general meetings and your position duties.

Yes

Do you know how to chair a meeting?

Yes – You are amazing! Proceed to number 3!

No – Contact Discover Governance.

3. Are you responsible for populating Councils or committees for your association or department?

What? – Sometimes various councils and committees need students at large, and someone has to recruit them. Are you that someone?

No – Proceed to number 4!

Yes

Do you know what to do?

Yes – Good for you! Proceed to number 4!

No – Discuss with your volunteer coordinator, check the volunteer coordinator section of this handbook, or get advice from Discover Governance.

4. Are you responsible for communicating with your association's membership?

No – You're ready to star the year!

Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on your position duties.

Yes – See the communication section of this handbook.

## ***VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT/MANAGEMENT***

1. Do you have a database of volunteer contacts?  
No – Create one with Excel or Word, create volunteer signup sheets, create mailing list.  
Yes – Proceed to number 2!
  
2. Are you responsible for populating Councils or committees for your association or department?  
No – Proceed to number 3!  
Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy, talk to your exec.  
Yes  
    Do you know what to do?  
        Yes – You are amazing! Proceed to number 3!  
        No – Check your bylaws or contact the chair of the Council or Committee.
  
3. Do you have a volunteer recruitment strategy?  
Yes – You’re ready to start the year!  
No  
    Create one! Talk to your exec, SGS, and Discover Governance for tips.



## PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

1. Are you responsible for general meetings?

No – Proceed to number 2!

Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on general meetings and your position duties.

Yes

Do you know what to do?

Yes – You got this! Proceed to number 2!

No – Check your bylaws/policy or contact Discover Governance.

2. Does your organization hold annual events?

No – Proceed to number 3!

Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on general meetings and your position duties.

Yes

Do you know what to do?

Yes – You are amazing! Proceed to number 3!

No – Check your policy manual, talk to your executive, ask SGS for advice.

3. Do you have any event ideas?

Yes – Proceed to number 4!

No

Do you know what to do?

Yes – Good for you! Proceed to number 4!

No – Discuss with your volunteer coordinator, check the volunteer coordinator section of this handbook, or get advice from Discover Governance.

4. Are you responsible for communicating with your association's membership?

No – You're ready to star the year!

Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on your position duties.

Yes – See the communication section of this handbook.

## FINANCES

1. Are you responsible for general meetings?
  - No – Proceed to number 2!
  - Not sure – Check your bylaws/policy on general meetings and your position duties.
  - Yes
    - Do you know what to do?
      - Yes – You got this! Proceed to number 2!
      - No – Check your bylaws/policy or contact Discover Governance.
2. Do you have access to your organization’s bank account?
  - No – Contact your bank.
  - Not sure – Contact your bank.
  - Yes – Great! Proceed to number 3.
3. Do you know who has signing authority?
  - Yes – Proceed to number 4!
  - No - Contact your bank, check your bylaws and policy manual, check past bank statements.
4. Do you know your organization’s rules for handling funds?
  - No – Discuss with your executive, check your bylaws and policy manual.
  - Yes – Fantastic! Proceed to number 5.
5. Do you know what your budget is?
  - No – Consult past budgets, check your bank account.
  - Yes – Proceed to number 6.
6. Do you know how to prepare an annual budget?
  - No – Consult past budgets, discuss with your executive, contact SGS, contact Discover Governance.
  - Yes – You’re a star! Proceed to number 7.
7. Do you have any budget reporting requirements?
  - No – Ok, you’re ready to start the year!
  - Not sure – Talk to your Faculty Association.
  - Yes – Talk to your Faculty Association about what/when to submit them.

# Department Councils

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## What is a Department Council?

According to the Section 42.3(3) of the General Faculties Council Policy Manual department council is defined as follows:

*“A Department Council is empowered to determine policy on internal department matters consistent with Faculty and University policy and providing the Department policy does not contravene the duties and responsibilities of the Chair as stipulated by the appropriate Dean, the Vice-Presidents, the President, the appropriate Faculty Council, General Faculties Council or the Board of Governors.”*

## Who Sits on Department Councils?

Department Councils consist of:

1. The Department Chair, who shall be Chair;
2. The Dean of the Faculty;
3. All continuing academic staff members of the academic staff of the Department;
4. Such other persons as may be appointed thereto by the Faculty Council on the recommendation of the Department Council;
5. Undergraduate students from the programs offered by the department concerned, the exact numbers to be determined by the Faculty Council on recommendation from the appropriate Department Council, as selected by the appropriate Student Association using whatever method the Association deems suitable.
6. Graduate Students

Check your constitution to see if you have a seat on the department council. If you do, make sure to attend these meetings, as it will give you an opportunity to build good relationships with the office staff and bring up any internal departmental issues which your constituents are concerned about.

# Student Advocacy

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## *A Step-by-Step Introduction*

### Step 1: Discover the issue, and its scope.

When an issue arises that affects your constituents, collect as many details as you can, figure out who has direct power in relation to the issue, and how you can interact with them, make a list of potential other stakeholders and/or allies, and determine potential courses the issue may take in the future so you can be prepared.

Uncovering potential issues before they blow up can make all the difference in your advocacy efforts.

<i>Keep in contact with...</i>			
<i>Your constituents</i>	<i>Students' Council</i>	<i>Your Faculty Association</i>	<i>Department Associations</i>
<i>Board of Governors Representative</i>	<i>GFC Representatives</i>	<i>Faculty Council Representatives</i>	<i>Department Council Representatives</i>

### Step 2: Consult constituents to fairly represent them.

Get feedback from your constituents through social media, tabling in faculty buildings, sending out feedback forms, holding town halls, or attending the meetings of clubs and associations in your faculty. The feedback you collect should be incorporated into your advocacy activities as much as possible.

### Step 3: Formulate possible outcomes for the issue.

Determine what your ideal outcome would be so that you have a clear goal in mind, but also think about other possible outcomes and plan how you will respond should that scenario arise.

### Step 4: Convince decision makers and combat opposition.

Figure out the best way to convince each of the decision makers related to the issue to act how you want them to, and the best way to counter any opposition you face, and put that plan into action through lobbying, awareness campaigns, petitions, and any other methods of advocacy at your disposal.

### Step 5: Evaluate.

Did you achieve the outcome you wanted? Why or why not? What would you do differently in the future? Evaluate your success, keep a record to help future advocates, and advertise your results (good or bad) to your constituents.

# Advocacy Planning Worksheet

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1. What is the issue I am advocating on?

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2. Who is the most important decision-maker involved in this issue?

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3. What is the best way to interact with this decision-maker?

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4. How will I spread knowledge of this issue?

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5. How will I consult my constituents on this issue? Do they even see it as an issue?

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6. What advocacy position will maintain my organization's integrity while still reflecting my constituents' opinions?

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7. What will my opposition say about my advocacy position?

<i>Their Argument</i>	<i>My Argument</i>

8. How can my advocacy position benefit stakeholders? How can I “sell” it?

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9. How will I get my point across to decision makers on this issue?

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# Asking Effective Questions

## Before you ask a question

Preparation is key. Take a moment to reflect before you ask.

- Are you sure your question hasn't been answered in the meeting materials?
- Why are you asking it?
  - You may discover you don't actually have a good reason.
  - If you have a clear idea of what you want to accomplish it will help you structure your question to get a better answer.
- What kind of answer do you want?
  - Yes or no answer
  - Clarification of facts
  - Presenter's opinion
- Would it be better to email your question?

## Strategies for asking effective questions

<i>Come prepared</i>	Read the materials in advance and understand your role as a representative.
<i>Ask questions respectfully</i>	You will be more successful if you treat others with the respect you wish to be treated with yourself.
<i>Draw from your own expertise</i>	Draw from skills you're learning in your studies to structure coherent, meaningful questions.
<i>Listen carefully</i>	Don't cause repetition, and listen to others to learn how to say what you want and get the best reaction.
<i>Practice</i>	Ask lots of questions, learn by trial and error.

## Basic Question Theory

How do you get the kind of answer you're looking for?

<p><b>Open Question</b> Deeper, more complex answers.</p> <p><b>Closed Question</b> Specific answers.</p>	<p><b>Factual Question</b> Data or clarification.</p> <p><b>Evaluative Question</b> Assessment of strengths, weaknesses, or progress.</p> <p><b>Interpretive Question</b> Opinion or speculation.</p>	<p><b>Hypothesis Testing</b> You think you already know the answer but want to test it.</p> <p><b>Leading Question</b> Lead the respondent to a particular answer.</p>	<p><b>Convergent Question</b> Has one answer.</p> <p><b>Divergent Question</b> Has multiple answers.</p>
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# Strategic Planning

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## What Is Strategic Planning?

Simply put, strategic planning determines where an organization is going over the next year or more, and how it's going to get there.

## SWOT Analysis:

This is a tool that identifies the **strengths**, **weaknesses**, **opportunities**, and **threats** of an organization. It's a basic, straightforward assessment model separated into internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) issues. Use it to determine what may assist you in accomplishing your objectives, and what obstacles must be overcome or minimized to achieve desired results.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>What do you do well?            What unique resources can you draw on?            What do others see as your strengths?</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>What could you improve?            Where do you have fewer resources than others?            What are others likely to see as weaknesses?</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>What opportunities are open to you?            What trends could you take advantage of?            How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?</p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <p>What threats could harm you?            What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?</p>

# Event Planning

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Planning is the most important part of running a successful event, and this means starting well in advance. The best way to approach planning is to develop a detailed management plan, which includes a timetable of what needs to be done and when. Crucial elements of the planning for the event, such as fundraising, booking the venue and performers need to happen well in advance of the date of your event so a timeline schedule is essential.

## Event Planning Checklist

Have you:

- ✓ Approved the event by your board of directors/council?
- ✓ Approved the event through BearsDen?
- ✓ Booked a venue?
- ✓ Made a budget?
- ✓ Created an advertising strategy?
- ✓ Considered safety risks?
- ✓ Checked to make sure there aren't any competing events on the same day?
- ✓ Created a timeline?
- ✓ Assessed what materials will be needed on the day of?
- ✓ Created and communicated the schedule for the event to all those involved?
- ✓ Recruited volunteers?
- ✓ Obtained a cash float if you need it?
- ✓ Printed tickets?

## Evaluation

At the conclusion of your event it is important to evaluate the event against the aims and objectives. This will allow you to identify and make appropriate changes, where necessary, to your event management plan to ensure the success of future event.

# Student Group Services

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Student Group Services is a service of the Students' Union intended specifically for the support and management of student groups on campus. SGS is responsible for administering the registration of groups with the University, the Graduate Students Association, and Students' Union. Every Departmental Association has to register through SGS to be officially recognized. Their contact information can be found at the back of this booklet.



# Governance Acronym Cheat Sheet

<b>AAC</b>	Academic Appeals Committee	<b>FA</b>	Faculty Association
<b>ALES</b>	Agriculture, Life & Environmental Sciences	<b>FADRO</b>	FA Deputy Returning Officer
<b>APC</b>	Academic Planning Committee	<b>FAMF</b>	Faculty Association Membership Fee
<b>APIRG</b>	Alberta Public Interest Research Group	<b>FDC</b>	Facilities and Development Committee
<b>APSA</b>	Alberta Pharmacy Students' Association	<b>FAUnA</b>	Faculty of ALES Undergraduate Association
<b>ASA</b>	Augustana Students' Association	<b>GFC</b>	General Faculties Council
<b>ASC</b>	Aboriginal Students Council	<b>GFCSC</b>	GFC Student Caucus
<b>ASC</b>	Academic Standards Committee	<b>GSA</b>	Graduate Students' Association
<b>ASC SOS</b>	Subcommittee on Standards	<b>ISSS</b>	Interdepartmental Science Students' Society
<b>AUFSJ</b>	L'Association des Universitaires de la Faculté Saint-Jean	<b>KSRSS</b>	Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation Student Society
<b>BAC</b>	Budget Advisory Committee	<b>LSA</b>	Law Students' Association
<b>BFC</b>	Board Finance Committee	<b>MNIF</b>	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees
<b>BoG</b>	Board of Governors	<b>MOOC</b>	Massive Online Open Course
<b>BSA</b>	Business Students' Association	<b>MSA</b>	Medical Students' Association
<b>CAC</b>	Council Administration Committee	<b>NASA</b>	Non-Academic Staff Association
<b>CASA</b>	Canadian Alliance of Student Associations	<b>NSSA</b>	Native Studies Students' Association
<b>CATP</b>	Campus Association Transfer Payment	<b>NUA</b>	Nursing Undergraduate Association
<b>CAUS</b>	Council of Alberta University Students	<b>OASIS</b>	Organization for Arts Students and Interdisciplinary Studies
<b>CLE</b>	Committee on the Learning Environment	<b>POTSU</b>	President of the SU
<b>COFA</b>	Council of Faculty Associations	<b>PSLA</b>	Post-Secondary Learning Act
<b>CORA</b>	Council of Residence Associations	<b>RBAC</b>	Residence Budget Advisory Committee
<b>COSA</b>	Council on Student Affairs	<b>RO</b>	Registrar's Office
<b>CRO</b>	Chief Returning Officer	<b>UAB</b>	University Appeal Board
<b>CSL</b>	Community Service Learning	<b>UAPPOL</b>	U of A Policies and Procedures Online
<b>DA</b>	Departmental Association	<b>UASC</b>	Undergraduate Awards and Scholarships Committee
<b>DFU</b>	Dedicated Fee Unit	<b>URI</b>	Undergraduate Research Initiative
<b>DG</b>	Discover Governance	<b>UTAC</b>	University Teaching Awards Committee
<b>DIE Board</b>	Discipline, Interpretation, and Enforcement Board	<b>VPA</b>	Vice-President Academic
<b>DRO</b>	Deputy Returning Officer	<b>VPOF</b>	Vice-President Operations and Finance
<b>ESA</b>	Education Students' Association	<b>VPSL</b>	Vice-President Student Life
<b>ESS</b>	Engineering Students' Society	<b>VPX</b>	Vice-President External

# Important Contacts

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**Your Faculty Association**

<https://su.ualberta.ca/governance/cofa/>



