

Communications Policy

Approval Date: April 13, 2023

Guiding Principles

1. In order to properly advance the objects of the Association, members need to be kept duly informed of matters of interest or concern to the Association. The Association will endeavor to provide its members with timely, accurate, and relevant information about the Association's bylaws, policies, services, initiatives, and negotiations.
2. The Association is committed to creating opportunities for its members to engage in public discussion about issues of concern to them and to engage in meaningful two-way communication.
3. The Association recognizes that electronic communications (e-mail, online forums, and the website) provide opportunities for interactive, two-way communication and reduced response time in the distribution of information by the Association to members and in the receipt of timely feedback from members.
4. The Association supports its members in the expression of their views, however controversial they may be, except where they are potentially an offense against law. Freedom of expression is importantly tied to members' exercise of academic freedom in their teaching, research, and service, and this includes their rights to criticize both the University and the Association.
5. The Association is committed to an equitable and non-discriminatory environment. As such, neither discrimination nor harassment will be tolerated in any communication, nor will statements that may amount to defamation against any person.
6. When communicating any information, the Association shall endeavor to report it consistently and accurately, whether in the media, to the public, or directly to the members.
7. The Association strives to protect members' privacy by refraining from communicating any matter communicated to it in confidence without the permission of the party or parties affected.
8. Elected representatives must exercise due care not to disseminate information that may prejudice the Association's ability to effectively settle disputes and conduct negotiations with the University.

1.0 Registered Trademarks

The acronym “AASUA” and the logo presented below are registered trademarks of the Association and along with any trademarks and other marks, whether registered or not, shall be consistently used and incorporated in all official documents, emails, website pages, online forums, and any other communication vehicles, where appropriate to do so and where such use has been permitted by AASUA. The logo shall not be used on any draft documents, including motions of any meetings, unless otherwise permitted by AASUA.



(Pantone 300M, CMYK - 100C, 44M)

2.0 External Communications

- 2.0.1 Only the President is the spokesperson on behalf of the Association. The President is authorized to speak to media sources on behalf of the Association. The President may appoint a spokesperson on specific issues. No staff member, Officer, Director, or any other Council member will speak to the media on behalf of the Association without prior authorization of the President, or if not available, the Vice-President.
- 2.0.2 Only the President and the Executive Director are authorized to speak to the University President and the Provost & Vice-President Academic on behalf of the Association.
- 2.0.3 Any AASUA communication vehicle used by any President (or as delegated to the Vice-President) as the spokesperson, such as social media vehicles which requires a login and password, is the property of the AASUA and shall not be changed.

3.0 Internal Communications from Elected Representatives

- 3.0.1 Directors (or their delegates) are authorized to communicate directly with members of their constituency group via the Association’s website platform. The University of Alberta’s email *listservs* is an alternative vehicle to communicate with the members, but the Directors are encouraged to use the

official AASUA platform. The content and form of such communications is each Director's responsibility and privilege. As a courtesy, Directors are encouraged to copy the President on their communications on the listserv.

- 3.0.2 Elected representatives are obliged to protect members' privacy by refraining from communicating confidential matters.
- 3.0.3 Other elected representatives (Councillors or Chairs of Standing or other AASUA Committees) require permission from the President if they wish to use the website platform or any of the Association's *listservs*.
- 3.0.4 Written procedures for using the website platform and *listservs* will be provided to elected representatives. Directors and Chairs may invite the President or the Executive Director to review their communications. Where such review is requested, feedback will be provided as soon as possible.
- 3.0.5 To facilitate communications by Directors of constituency groups, the President shall provide Directors with unapproved meeting minutes as soon as possible after each Council meeting.

4.0 Online Discussion Forums for Members

- 4.0.1 Executive may suspend or terminate its operation of any online discussion forum if in the Executive's opinion an online discussion forum, including the "Members' Forum", is being misused or used in a way that could expose the Association to potential liability.
- 4.0.2 The Association will not permit anonymous posting on the Members' Forum or any other online forum.
- 4.0.3 Each individual who posts to a forum is responsible for their own content.
- 4.0.4 Elected representatives are not responsible for moderating the expression of others.
- 4.0.5 Members will have the option to write to the Executive Director with respect to any post that appears to them to breach the Guiding Principles, may be conduct inconsistent with the Bylaws, or may be an offense against the law. Such posts will be reviewed by the Executive Director who has the authority to remove postings that violate these rules on an interim basis. If the Executive Director removes a post, their decision accompanied by the written complaint(s) will be reviewed by the Executive normally within 24 hours, which will decide whether the post is restored or removed. The material in question will not be re-posted, disseminated in any communication vehicle, or otherwise distributed in any fashion unless the Executive decides that the communication poses no potential liability to the Association, complies with the Guiding Principles, is consistent with the Bylaws, and is not an offense against the law.
- 4.0.6 The "Members Forum" shall be on an "opt in" basis only, where members will be required to accept terms and conditions as the AASUA sees fit, in exchange for the privilege of using the "Members Forum".

4.0.7 Executive is ultimately responsible for the “Members Forum”, and therefore members of Executive shall not participate in the “Members Forum”, except if allowed to do so during an election in accordance with the Elections and By-Elections Policy.

4.0.8 All AASUA academic staff elected or appointed onto the General Faculties Council (GFC) shall be allowed to communicate with each other in an “opt in” digital space on the AASUA website.

5.0 Continuing Improvement in Communications

5.0.1 At Council’s request, an ad hoc Communications Committee may be struck to explore mechanisms for enhancing communications between Council and members, and among members. This work will include, but is not limited to, creation or improvement in the form and function of any of the Association’s communication vehicles.

6.0 AASUA Website platform and Listservs

6.0.1 The AASUA *listservs* have been established by the University of Alberta for use by the Association and for the benefit of the academic staff.

6.0.2 The Association has sole ownership of the listservs and responsibility for updating members’ names and e-mail addresses in a timely manner.

6.0.3 The *listservs* may not be used without the permission of the Association and the lists will not be provided to any other unit.

6.0.4 Each constituency group’s communications vehicles on the website platform and the *listserv* is available for use by the elected Director or designate of that constituency group (see 1.10.2.3). Each Director or designate must ensure that the content of messages they send follows the Guiding Principles of the Association’s Communications Policy.

6.0.5 If an elected representative wishes to send a notice using another constituency group’s communication vehicle on the website platform or the *listserv*, this will normally require the prior approval of the particular Director of the constituency group, and the AASUA President or the Executive Director. The President may refer a request to the Officers or to the Executive.

7.0 Survey Policy (Council 2017.04.20)

7.0.1 The Association will administer all AASUA surveys.

7.0.2 All survey data belongs to the Association and the Executive shall determine whether survey results shall be disclosed or disseminated.

7.0.3 Council may recommend to Executive a survey of the membership in whole or in part.

7.0.4 Directors of a constituency group (or their delegates) are authorized to survey members of their constituency group, including the development of bargaining

priorities for their constituencies, when and as they wish. The content of a survey is each Director's responsibility and privilege.

- 7.0.5 Chairs of Standing, *Ad Hoc*, or Joint Committees require permission from the Executive if they wish to survey members.
- 7.0.6 The Association encourages the use of expert advice/guidance on survey design and structure.
- 7.0.7 Survey results disseminated to Executive or the membership will not contain any reference to individuals.

8.0 CAUT Gen (Council 2017.10.26)

Each year, as soon as possible after July 1st, the Executive Director shall notify the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) of the names of Officers and Directors of the Association so that the individuals serving in these roles may be enrolled in CAUT's "CAUT-GEN" listserv (cautgen@lists.caut.ca). The login and password provided to the Officers and Directors shall not be changed.

Only the President can use the listserv to take formal positions on behalf of the Association.