Alberta University of the Arts

Board of Governors
Approved Minutes
December 9, 2025
4:00pm – 6:30pm
Via Teams

Voting Members: Adrian Stimson, Board Chair, Patrick Chiu (virtual), Chris Cran, Dr. Janis Goldie, Tom Graham, Ruby Gupta, Kurtis Lesick, Mackenzie Kelly-Frère, Samantha Mirjah, Tammi Price, Sheila Taylor (virtual) and Murray Wittmeier.

Management & Resource Members: Jessica O'Connell, Executive Director, External Relations, Pablo Ortiz, Dean of Students, Scott Powell, Vice President Finance and Operations, and Cherie Tutt, University Secretary and Joanne Deaver, Scribe.

Guests: Gitz Derange, Manager Indigenous Initiatives, Carissa Cameron-Matthews, Director, Academic Programs, Dr. Alex Link, Dean, Academic Programs

Regrets: Chi Iliya-Ndule, Evan Legate, Tanya Mryglod.

The Chair provided the land acknowledgement.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. and quorum was confirmed.

1. Approval of the Agendas

Moved / Seconded

That the Agenda for the December 9, 2025 Board of Governors meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Conflict of Interest Declaration

Tammi Price declared a conflict for Item 16 and will step out of the meeting for this discussion.

3. Consent Agenda

Documentation was included in the meeting materials.

The following Consent Agenda items were adopted:

3.1 October 21, 2025 Board of Governors Meeting Minutes.

That the Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on October 21, 2025 be approved.

Adopted

The Board nominated two individuals to be considered for an honorary degree via Email Vote from November 25 – December 2, 2025. This is reported in accordance with the Board E-Voting Protocol.

The following Consent Agenda items were received by the Board for information:

3.2 Board Standing Committee Reports
1. Advancement
2. Governance & HR
3. Finance and Audit

3.3 Constituent Reports
1. Students' Association (SA) with Budget
2. Faculty Association (AUAFA)
3. Staff (AUPE)
4. General Faculties Council

3.5 Cabinet Reports
1. Dean, Academic Programs
2. Vice President Finance & Operations
3. Dean Innovation, Learning & Development
4. Dean of Students
5. Executive Director, External Relations
6. Executive Director, People & Culture

4. Naming Policy and Procedure

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. Sara Anhorn and Jessica O'Connell presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Chair of Advancement Committee commented that feedback from the Advancement Committee has been integrated into the policy documents.
- Management reported that the policy documents have been restructured to emphasize the focus on Philanthropic Naming and clarify that the intent and scope of these policy documents is not to address naming related to student awards, sponsorship or other forms of naming
- In response to questions, it was confirmed that:
  - This Policy does not preclude other kinds of naming, which would likely fall under honorary naming and follow a different process.
  - Existing naming is currently being grandfathered.
- The Board suggested re-wording of section 2.1 to change the focus to AUArts' Mandate versus the Government of Alberta's Mandate given the distinct accountabilities.

Moved / Seconded

That the Board of Governors rescind the Donor Recognition and Naming Policy and approve the creation of a new Philanthropic Naming Policy and Procedure, in the forms presented to the Board, effective immediately, and as recommended by the Advancement Committee with the requested amendment.

Carried

5. Annual Report to Government

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The Chair of Finance and Audit and the Vice President, Finance and Operations presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported that the University is required to submit an annual report that provides an overview of the organization's operations, including a review of progress toward stated goals and outcomes reached, highlights of achievements over the past year, and the audited financial statements. Following submission to the government the Annual report is also posted to the AUArts' website.
- The Finance and Audit committee's suggestions are captured in the Annual Report.
- In response to a question, it was reported that the Provincial Priorities reporting is included in the package to the Minister. This includes Investment and student support services research and freedom of speech information.

Moved / Seconded

That the Board of Governors approve the 2024-2025 AUArts' Annual Report, in the form provided to the Board, and authorize the Vice-President Finance and Operations to make non-substantive changes prior to submission to the Government of Alberta, as recommended by the Finance and Audit Committee.

Carried

6. Tuition and Fee Proposal

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The Chair of Finance and Audit and the Vice President, Finance and Operations presented this item.

Highlights:

- Management provided a presentation on the proposed tuition for 2026-2027 noting that the Post-Secondary Learning Act and Tuition and Fees Regulation cap domestic tuition at 2% and that a 9% increase to international undergraduate tuition is proposed to bring the university more closely aligned with other post-secondary institutions.
- It was reported that to improve equitable fee distribution for students the non-regulated fee structure is being simplified. Thirty (30) separate Consumable Studio Share Fees, previously tied to an individual course, will be eliminated, and replaced with single per-credit fees.
- The Board discussed the comprehensive process. There were no questions.

Moved / Seconded

That the Board of Governors approve the 2026-27 AUArts' Tuition and Fees Proposal in the documents provided to the Board, as recommended by the Finance and Audit Committee.

Carried

7. Exceptional Tuition Increase (ETI) Proposal

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The Chair of Finance and Audit and the Vice President, Finance and Operations, Dean of Academic Programs and Director, Academic Operations presented this item.

Highlights:

- Management reported that the Ministry of Advanced Education opened the opportunity for post-secondary institutions in Alberta to submit ETI proposals by December 31, 2025 and that the university has prepared a submission. An overview of requirements for ETIs was provided. A 24% tuition increase is recommended for the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Studio Arts and the Bachelor of Design Visual Communication Design specializations.
- In response to questions, it was confirmed that:
  - The overall funding challenge persists, and the ETI does not directly close the funding gap for these programs. However, this gap may be addressed in the future through the funding model changes recommended by the Expert Panel on Post-Secondary Institution Funding (Mintz Report).
  - These changes only are applicable to incoming students.
- The Board discussed:
  - The rationale for a unified ask for both specializations.
  - Tuition costs at peer institutions and tuition challenges across the country

- That increased funding tied to the ETI must go directly to program quality improvements and the related reporting requirements to the government.
- Increasing costs associated technology for the programs and that this funding would support contemporizing the studios.
- The proposed professionalization quality improvements.
- The risks associated with the proposal not being approved by government.

Moved / Seconded
That the Board of Governors approve the AUArts' Exceptional Tuition Increase proposal substantially as presented for submission to the Minister of Advanced Education. **Carried**

8. Investment Management Agreement (IMA)

The President and CEO and Vice-President, Finance and Operations presented this item.

Highlights:

- Management reported that the IMA includes performance and transparency metrics tied to 40% of the University's base operating grant and that the current agreement expires in 2025.
- The University has been working with the Ministry on the new targets for the next three-year agreement and had reached tentative targets in mid November, however, in late November the government contacted the Vice-President Finance and Operations to alert the University of a change to the target for domestic enrolment proposing greater increases year over year with tolerance bands, causing some concern about the university's ability to meet the targets. However, prior to the meeting, government confirmed they would revert back to the targets and require approval by the end of December and Management is expected to receive the updated proposal by end of day.
- Given the accelerated timelines, the Board discussed and agreed to delegate approval of the IMA to the Finance and Audit Committee. The final signed version will be shared with the Board when received.
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the new metrics are higher than what was originally proposed in September, but that they are a reasonable improvement and should be attainable.

Moved / Seconded
That the Board of Governors delegate to the Finance and Audit Committee the authority to approve the Investment Management Agreement between Alberta University of the Arts and the Ministry of Advanced Education and require final execution by the Board Chair.
Carried

9. Centennial Update

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The Executive Director, External Relations presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Board received a presentation on the Centennial goals and programs.
- The Board discussed the overall timelines for Centennial and reporting on the state of the various objectives.

10. Indigenous Pathways Update

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The Dean of Students and the Manger, Indigenous Initiatives presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Board received a presentation on progress to date on the Indigenous Pathways reconciliactions.
- The Manager Indigenous Initiatives share success stories of both students and community.
- The development of a potential partnership with other post-secondary institutions around programming to support Indigenous students and initiatives was shared.
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that there is a network of colleagues working in this area who meet once per term.

Secretary's Note: A 10 minute break was held from 5:45 – 5:55 p.m.

11. President and CEO Report

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The President and CEO presented this item.

Highlights:

- The President and CEO reported on:
  - External meetings with community and government, highlighting a recent trip to Ottawa to attend Senator Fridhandler's Opening of Alumni Chris Miller's piece and attendance at the Ministry Advanced Education President and Board Chair Panel on the Mintz Report.
  - External presentations, including with the Rotary Club of Calgary.
  - Post-Secondary Network meetings.
  - Submission of the Bachelor of Creative Industries Part B to the Campus Alberta Quality Council.
  - That the Vice President, Academic will be starting January 9th.

12. Board Chair Report

Documentation was included in the meeting materials. The Board Chair presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Board Chair reported on activities from October to December, highlighting key community events and meetings.

13. Adjournment of the Open Session

Moved / Seconded That the Board of Governors adjourn the Open Session and move into the Closed Session. **Carried**

Secretary's Note: The Open Session adjourned at 6:04 p.m. and Management and Observers were excused from the meeting.