

Athabasca University Mandate

Founded in 1970, Athabasca University is a public, board-governed, open and distance education university, operating as a Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution under the authority of the Alberta *Post-secondary Learning Act*, 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 as well as 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 on-line 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 coordination, 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 like the Canadian Virtual University, reflect Athabasca University's longstanding commitment to adult and lifelong learners, to Aboriginal communities, to learners in remote, rural and northern areas, to underserved urban populations, and to students in other universities' programs 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 also 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.

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