



2018-19 BSA Strategy & Long Term Vision

Mission of the BSA

“The Business Students’ Association seeks to create an inclusive and engaging environment for undergraduate Business students, and to advocate for student resources and opportunities in preparing its members for the utmost success upon graduation from the University of Alberta.”

Background & Justification

In recent years, the Business Students’ Association has found itself to be operating in an increasingly vibrant and active ecosystem within the Albert School of Business. With 27 student groups within the faculty alone, and the trend of interdisciplinary groups increasingly aiming to recruit business students, the BSA faces new challenges in engaging students and communicating our unique value proposition to our constituents. In the last 5 years we have faced material declines in the variety of our event offerings and ability to attract corporate partnerships, in part, as a result of these new obstacles.

The majority of BSA’s across Canada are structured as Umbrella Organizations, where the BSA is an overarching body and clubs and conferences exist within and derive their power from the greater BSA. Previous Executive Committee’s have recognized the positive attributes of this model and the BSA’s distinctive ability to operate in this manner. Moving towards an umbrella organization, or at minimum taking on this positioning, would allow the BSA to expend greater resources on promoting our flagship events, emphasizing our services, and increasing our focus on academic advocacy. This focus could also allow us to be more supportive in promoting the 27 clubs within the Alberta School of Business while guiding the general trajectory of the clubs community to ensure that student needs and concerns are being addressed at a macro level. The majority of the goals outlined within this document are steps to take to alter the trajectory of future BSA’s towards being an umbrella organization. Though a full umbrella role as it exists within other schools may not be possible, the BSA has significant capabilities to structure its affairs in a way to guide the broader clubs community within the school of business. Adapting to the increasingly dynamic environment within the Alberta School of Business is necessary in order to maintain the BSA’s continued success.



Short term goals (in progress)

- Implementation of Department Associations
 - Currently, the School of Business is one of the few Undergraduate Faculties without Department Associations, which are representative student groups able to voice the concerns of a specific major or program
 - This year, we intend to broaden the base membership of department associations to include those in the major and minor of the given program. This will give smaller majors the opportunity to voice their concerns through these representative channels
 - Adjustments will be made to rules governing DA's to reduce start-up costs and attract clubs who have expressed hesitation in years past
 - The BSA will is tentatively planning to host a "Town Hall" style event, where club Presidents and Executives could ask questions, learn more, and engage in consultations and planning for future years

- Fair allocation of Office Space
 - Given the current reevaluation of club office space by the undergraduate office, the BSA would be well suited to maintain communications to ensure that we can lobby for and represent the interests of clubs effectively. Currently, there are some clubs with their own office, some clubs that share office with 1 or 2, and many clubs who have lobbied for but have yet to receive office space
 - The goal for the BSA is to consult with all 27 student clubs through the BCC to ensure that club interests are a top of mind concern in the coming reorganization. The BSA aims to achieve a fair disbursement of space while recognizing that almost all clubs will have to share space in some way.

- Strengthening of the Business Clubs Council (BCC) Terms of Reference
 - The BCC Terms of Reference lay out a set of terms by which the BCC exists and operates. In the coming year, we will be altering the terms of reference to strengthen operational processes, clearly outline how a club would enter and leave the BCC, and develop clear expectations for member clubs
 - The BSA also aims to reorient the BCC as a body that can represent the interests of clubs to external stakeholders. This is an important step in increasing the legitimacy of the BCC and laying the foundation for a future umbrella role for the BSA.



- Expanded focus Advocacy
 - The Advocacy Council, a regularly-scheduled committee comprising DA Representatives and the BSA VP Academic, will be strengthened by the implementation of Department Associations
 - The Advocacy Survey, now in its third year, will provide consistent, year-over-year data outlining student concerns and trends in order to present a clear picture of where undergraduate business students see room for improvement
 - Through the Business Clubs' Council, the BSA has unique vehicle through which to consult with business clubs and advocate on their behalf to external stakeholders

- Use of the Student Activity Fund (SAF) to promote club collaboration
 - Student feedback has consistently noted that the prevalence of events within the Alberta School of Business create fatigue and appear overwhelming to those who want to get involved
 - Through One on One meetings with 25 club Presidents, the BSA has noted that a vast majority of clubs want to see more collaborative events
 - Through our spending power, the BSA will aim to promote collaborative events in hopes of reducing BCC time conflicts and overlapping events with similar value propositions to address both student and club concerns

- Diversified sources of funding (1-2 yrs)
 - Currently, the \$10 per semester student levy charged by the BSA is allocated entirely to the SAF account, which is restricted to spending on club funding, conference funding and projects of public good. This fund is highly underutilized and will be up for renewal in 2020
 - The BSA is one of the only Faculty Association's at the University of Alberta that does not have student fees fund their operating account
 - When the FAMF Fee is up for renewal, the BSA will increase the amount of the fee, divert a larger amount of resources towards funding clubs and department associations, limit conference funding, and allocate a large portion of the fee towards the operational budget. This operational levy would allow the BSA to significantly reduce prices for all services and events while maintaining their high standards and quality
 - The BSA will pursue additional funding sources within the short term, including Students' Union grants and philanthropic donations, as a means of reducing our dependence on volatile sponsorship dollars

- Emphasis on flagship events



- This year the BSA has removed underperforming events such as our Golf Tournament, Charity Carnival, and Charity Run while bringing back the widely popular Sports Tournament.
- Graduation will be formatted as a more casual, cocktail style event in hopes of increasing attendance and creating a unique value proposition that does not conflict with the BSA's Winter Gala.
- The BSA Apprentice challenge has been shortened to a 3 day period and moved to the end of January in hopes of increasing participation throughout the entire event and having a shorter gap between ticket sales and the event occurring
- Maintenance of a strong services portfolio
 - As the Faculty Association for the Alberta School of Business, the BSA is well positioned to be a central hub for services within the Faculty of Business. Services such as Take a Student to Eat (TASTE), the Mentorship program, and Anti-Burnout will allocated more resources and promoted more heavily in the years ahead
 - Building off of previous successes, the BSA intends to further expand our offerings of equipment rentals, charger rentals, and subsidized business cards
- Cementing a culture of transparency
 - Though transparency has always been a priority for the BSA, the previous year introduced the deliverables of a financial transparency report and livestreamed full council meetings
 - The BSA intends to continue releasing financial transparency reports and livestreaming key meetings to share information, promote openness, and allow students to hold the BSA accountable
- Development of a strong team culture
 - A large strength of the BSA is it's team of Cohort Reps, Directors, and Executives.
 - Structurally, each Executive portfolio relatively siloed, with each Director within working largely independent of one another
 - Implementing frequent portfolio meetings, interactive full council meetings, and frequent team bonding will allow ideas to transfer both within and between portfolios and increase the pace at which the BSA receives feedback

Future Plans & Timeline



- A strengthened BCC with representative capacity (2-5 years)
 - Amendment of the BCC terms of reference is an important first step in outlining clear rules and a clear structure for the BCC for the future. The amended terms of reference will include the capacity for the BCC to speak on behalf of its members, allowing the BSA a more effective mandate for advocating on behalf of student clubs
 - Cooperation, as opposed to collaboration, must be the short term objective until there are strong and established bonds between BCC member clubs. Cooperation includes the use of the BCC Calendar, implemented last year, in order to see open days to host events and reduce the possibilities of time conflicts for students
 - By moving towards providing larger grants and more human resources support for clubs, the BSA can begin to build an environment of collaboration and goodwill that will build support for future collaborative efforts and initiatives

- Broadening and supporting Department Associations (2-3 years)
 - Once Department Associations have been established, the BSA will aim to delegate representative authority to more unique programs such as the Bilingual Bachelor of Commerce degree, Human Resources program, and Entrepreneurship major
 - When the FAMF Fee is renewed in 2020, the BSA will seek to provide larger grants to Department Associations than what is currently available for Business Clubs

- Embracing our Faculty Association identity (2-3 yrs)
 - The BSA is a Faculty Association that resembles a club in that a significant fraction of our resources is devoted towards events
 - This confusion devalues the BSA's status as a representative body for undergraduates within the Faculty of Business and blurs our ability to effectively engage in academic advocacy
 - By reducing excess events, devoting more resources towards flagship events (eg. Ignite, Gala, Graduation), and expanding services, the BSA can more closely resemble the umbrella role that other Faculty Associations take on
 - By increasing our focus on academic advocacy year-over-year, the BSA can embrace our role as a representative body

- Expansion of office space (5+yrs)



- Following the reallocation of office space, the BSA will push to expand access to student space to ensure that Business Clubs are accommodated and unhindered in their ability to operate effectively
- In the long term, it is crucial to ensure that the shortage of student space will be addressed in the construction of the next Business Building, although this is a very long term goal
- Focus on student pride (1-3 yrs)
 - While the BSA and other ASoB clubs have many events and opportunities for students, there is little particular attention given towards creating pride within the faculty
 - This could be accomplished in the future through large-scale, collaborative events among the BCC, more affordable and diverse merchandise, and advocacy work to ensure that student voices are being represented to the faculty

Metrics of Success

In addition to the goals listed above, there are some concrete measures we will be tracking to ensure that the BSA is achieving it's goals and working towards behaving as an umbrella organization

- Increased usage and awareness of BSA Services
 - We will closely monitor the use of BSA services over the next year, both through actual use and awareness listed on the Student Satisfaction Survey, as a key metric of success
- SAF utilization
 - We are striving for increase our use of the Student Activity Fund in hopes of moving closer to breakeven. This fits with the goal of utilizing this fund in order to create maximum value for business students.
- Increase in Net Promoter Score and approachability of BSA Executives and Directors
 - We would like to see an increase in the BSA Net Promoter Score (how likely people are to recommend events to others) semester to semester as a means of tracking our reputation and event strength
 - Responses to “Are BSA Executives Approachable” and “Are BSA Directors Approachable” will be measured as a key indicator of success
- Student involvement in BSA processes and affairs
 - We will be tracking student attendance at our open meetings and AGM's in order to identify and respond to year-over-year trends. We strive to use



social media to promote the times and locations of these meetings beforehand in order to increase attendance and participation.

- Election Competitiveness and voter turnout
 - The level of competition and number of candidates running in the BSA Executive elections, along with voter turnout, are seen as strong indicators of student engagement with the BSA
- Strengthening of the BCC
 - We hope to pass an amended Terms of Reference before the BSA's Fall Annual General Meeting in order to strengthen the identity of the group. We will continue to consult with BCC clubs as a means of identifying areas of improvement.