

Athabasca University Governing Council Members – Biographies



Barry Walker (Chair)

Mr. Barry Walker has been a member of Athabasca University Governing Council (AUGC) since August, 2004 and was appointed as Chair on December 9, 2009. As part of his AUGC duties, Mr. Walker chairs the Executive Committee and also serves as an ex officio member of all standing committees of AUGC. During his tenure as a public member on Governing Council, prior to his appointment as Chair, Mr. Walker served as Chair of the Finance and Audit Committees, and as a member of the Human Resources and Executive Committees of Governing Council.

Mr. Walker is a partner with Peterson Walker LLP and has provided over 40 years of audit, accounting and tax services to a variety of clients. He was admitted to the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta (ICAA) in 1971, and was awarded the Fellow of the Chartered Accountants (FCA) in 2005.

Mr. Walker is a strong supporter of Athabasca University and its mission and mandate. As a past student of Athabasca University he has experienced firsthand the benefits of distance learning and has a clear understanding of the student experience.

Between the years of 1980 - 2005, Mr. Walker was also a part-time instructor at Grant MacEwan College in the Accounting, Insurance, Legal Assistant and Management Studies Programs.

Mr. Walker has a long record of involvement with community organizations including the Arthritis Association of Edmonton, Glengarry Child Care Society, Gyro Club of Edmonton, Grant MacEwan Faculty Association, Volunteer Centre of Edmonton, City of Edmonton's Children's Services, and also served as Chair of the Prostate Cancer Golf Tournament (a joint venture between the Gyro Club of Edmonton and the Canadian Cancer Society). Mr. Walker has also been a member of the municipal council of the Summer Village of Mewatha Beach since 1990.



Dr. Frits Pannekoek (President)

Dr. Frits Pannekoek became the sixth president of Athabasca University on June 1, 2005. Dr. Pannekoek's interest in and commitment to Athabasca University is reflected in 20 years as a tutor and course developer here. His experience with distance education, blended learning and the development of innovative learning environments are tremendous benefits to the University as it completes its transformation to the on-line environment.

An Albertan, Dr. Pannekoek earned his honours Bachelor of Arts in 1969 and Master of Arts (1970) at the University of Alberta before completing his Ph.D. (1974) with a dissertation on western Canadian history and Indigenous peoples at Queen's University.

Prior to joining Athabasca University in an executive capacity, Dr. Pannekoek had been the Director of Information Resources at the University of Calgary, with academic appointments in the Faculty of Communications and Culture and the Department of History. As Director of Information Resources, he had direct responsibility for the university library and its five branch libraries, the university archives, the university press and the Nickle Arts Museum. He has also been the chair of The Alberta Library, which is a consortium of more than 300 libraries and the Health Knowledge Network, which is a health information collective.

Dr. Pannekoek has a substantial reputation as a Canadian historian for the contributions he has made over the last 30 years with his academic fields of western Canadian and Métis history, museum and heritage studies, and information and communications studies. Dr. Pannekoek's long-standing interest in Aboriginal communities is reflected in his many publications as well as his participation in initiatives such as the partnership that led to the interpretive centre for Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the University of Calgary partnership with Red Crow College.

Dr. Pannekoek is recognized nationally for his leadership in the creation of digital resources and the transformation of academic publishing. He has been involved in the development of the Information Commons at the University of Calgary, an online resource that supports the integration of innovative technologies into the learning and teaching environment. He is also currently a member of the Alberta SuperNet Research Alliance which is studying the impact of the SuperNet in Alberta and is regularly called upon to serve as a provincial and national policy advisor.

An ex-officio member of Governing Council, Dr. Pannekoek serves on the Executive, Finance, Governance, Human Resources, and Institutional Advancement Standing Committees; he is also the Chair of the Honorary Awards Committee.



Brian Curial (Vice Chair)

Brian Curial is a partner at the law firm of Miller Thomson LLP with a regulatory practice focusing on the health industry. He is a senior member of Miller Thomson's Health Industry Practice Group and serves as general counsel to a number of professional colleges and associations, assisting them with organizational and governance matters as well as their day to day legal affairs.

Prior to his legal career, Mr. Curial worked for over a decade in the real estate, finance and land development industries. Mr. Curial has published in legal journals and regularly presents articles on professions and occupations law. In addition, Mr. Curial is a guest lecturer who teaches professional responsibility at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine.

In addition to his law practice, Mr. Curial is active in his community and has served as a member on the Governing Boards of numerous not-for-profit organizations. Mr. Curial is currently also a member of the Board of Directors of the Skeleton Lake Stewardship Association, a not-for-profit environmental organization. He served 10 years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Better Business Bureau of Central and Northern Alberta and in 2002 was presented with the Golden Jubilee Medal for his dedicated volunteer work for the Canadian Council of Better Business Bureaus.

This is Mr. Curial's second term on Governing Council. He was appointed as vice chair on December 9, 2010 where he serves as a member of the Academic Affairs, Human Resources and Executive Committees.



Shawn Wasel (Public Member)

Mr. Shawn Wasel joined Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. (Al-Pac) in 1992 as a research biologist and played an essential role in developing the company's ecosystem management program. He is now director of environmental resources at Al-PAC

Mr. Wasel is an experienced and active director. He is a former vice-chair of the Albert Emerald Foundation and a board member of the Canadian Boreal Initiative's Boreal Leadership Council, the Alberta-Biomonitoring Program and the Forest Products Association of Canada.

A specialist in wildlife ecology and the effects of industrial land use, Mr. Wasel earned his Master of Science in zoology from the University of Alberta in 1995. Born and raised in Edmonton, with summers spent in the Athabasca area, he now lives with his family near Athabasca on a ranch at Baptiste Lake.

Mr. Wasel is serving his second term on Governing Council and is a member of the Finance & Property and Honorary Awards Committees.



John Trefanenko (Public Member)

Mr. Trefanenko spent 25 years in the employ of the Provincial Government, retiring in 1993 as the Regional Manager, Family Support Services and Services to Persons with Disabilities, St. Paul Regional Consultation Unit. Upon his retirement, Mr. Trefanenko spent eight years in the real estate industry.

Mr. Trefanenko is heavily involved in his community. He is currently the Mayor of St. Paul, where he has served as a member of the municipal council for more than 20 years. He also serves as a member of the local Chamber of Commerce and Lions Club and has maintained his membership in both organizations since the 1970's.

Mr. Trefanenko has served on numerous boards and committees relating to education, social services and municipal affairs, most recently contributing to the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, the Alberta Recycling Management Authority, the Native Adolescent Treatment Center Advisory Board, and the St. Paul Housing Foundation.

Mr. Trefanenko is currently serving his second term on Athabasca University Governing Council. He serves as a member of the Audit and Academic Affairs Committees.



Jill Matthew (Public Member)

Jill Matthew is the Senior Vice-President, Strategic Development and Planning at EPCOR. Prior to joining the Strategic Development and Planning Team, Jill lead EPCOR's Retail Customer Service and Customer Service Delivery Solution operations in Alberta and Ontario.

Ms. Matthew graduated from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Commerce degree. She joined the audit staff of Price Waterhouse, qualified as a Chartered Accountant and subsequently as a Certified Management Consultant.

Ms. Matthew has instructed financial accounting at the University of Alberta and for the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta. Her areas of consulting experience and specialization have included Project Management, Performance Improvement, Change Management, Organizational Design, Financial Cost Management and Customer Relationship Management.

Ms. Matthew has a long record of involvement in the not-for-profit sector and actively supports her community. Some of her volunteer efforts past and present include positions with: Alberta Ballet, Edmonton Dance Factory Parent Association, Telus World of Science, Strategic Leadership Forum, Edmonton Chapter Canadian Foundation for Ileitis and Colitis, Vagonava Dance Society, Canadian Cancer Society and the Canadian Kidney Foundation.

Ms. Matthew is serving her second term on Athabasca University Governing Council. She serves as Chair of the Audit Committee, and as a member of the Finance & Property and Executive Committees.



Dr. William Byrne (Public Member)

Dr. Byrne, a native-born Albertan, began his public service as a professional archaeologist with the National Museums of Canada, focusing on the prehistory and early history of the Great Plains region of western North America. This led to a lengthy career with the Alberta provincial government in a series of increasingly senior positions in the fields of culture and heritage. Subsequently he was appointed Deputy Minister of Alberta Advanced Education, where he played an active part in shaping the current post secondary environment in Alberta.

Dr. Byrne earned his Honours Bachelor of Arts (Archaeology) at the University of Calgary in 1967, Master of Philosophy (Anthropology/Archaeology) at Yale University 1970, and his Doctor of Philosophy (Anthropology/Archaeology) at Yale University 1973. Dr. Byrne also earned a Certificate in the Senior and Executive Officer Development Program from the Faculty of Business at the University of Alberta: 1994.

He has been the recipient of a number of past awards including the Lieutenant Governor's Gold Medal from the University of Calgary: 1967, The Award of Merit from the Society for Historical Archaeology: 1994, the Bronze Medal for Innovative Management from the Institute of Public Administration of Canada: 1994, and the Premier's Award of Excellence: 1995.

Now retired from the Alberta public service, Dr. Byrne is currently serving his second term as a

public member of Athabasca University Governing Council. He serves as Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, and as a member of the Institutional Advancement and Executive Committees.

Diane Davies (Public Member)

Ms. Davies is the Senior Assistant Vice President, Process Improvement for Canadian Western Bank. She is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta (ICAA) and was recognized as a member of the Vic Dzurko Honour Roll by the ICAA in 1986. She articulated with KPMG in Edmonton. Prior to becoming a Chartered Accountant Ms. Davies obtained her Bachelor of Commerce Degree with Distinction from the University of Alberta in 1983.

Ms. Davies is actively involved in her community. Some of her past and present volunteer efforts include McMan Youth Family and Community Services Association Regional and Provincial Boards (President, Treasurer), Edmonton and Area Corporate Challenge Board of Directors, Edmonton Community Foundation Audit Committee, Alberta and N.W.T. Figure Skating Association (Treasurer), Edmonton Street Performers Festival (Treasurer) and Theatre Network (Treasurer).

Ms. Davies is serving her first term on Athabasca University Governing Council. She currently serves as Chair of the Finance & Property Committee, and as a member of the Audit, Executive and Human Resources Committees.

Rai Batra (Public Member)

Andy Neigel (Public Member)

Robert (Bob) Splane (Public Member)

Heather Kennedy (Public Member)

Dr. Donna Romyn (Academic Staff Member)

Donna Romyn is the Dean, Faculty of Health Disciplines at Athabasca University. Dr. Romyn received her Doctorate of Philosophy (Nursing) (1998), Master of Nursing (1991), and Bachelor of Nursing (1974) degrees from the University of Alberta.

Besides contributing her own work for publication, she is generous in sharing her expertise and knowledge by providing peer reviews, mentoring students and faculty, and giving presentations locally and internationally. She also serves her profession as a member of the Alberta Nursing Education Administrators group and is the Chair of the Nursing Advisory Council of Alberta.

Dr. Romyn is currently serving her first term on Athabasca University Governing Council as the Academic Staff Member nominated by Athabasca University Academic Council, and serves as a member on the Academic Affairs Committee.



Mr. John Ollerenshaw (Academic Staff Member)

John Ollerenshaw is a multimedia course materials editor with Educational Media Development at Athabasca University. He is also the managing editor of the academic journal "*The Trumpeter*", and has been AU's representative on the Council of the University of the Arctic and a member of UArctic's Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies program committee.

Before coming to AU, Mr. Ollerenshaw spent several years in the private publishing business, including as owner and publisher of *The Athabaskan*, a weekly newspaper in Athabasca, and owner of Athabaskan Press, a small book publishing enterprise.

Mr. Ollerenshaw is a student at AU, starting in 1980 and continues to take courses from time to time. He is and has been active in the community, serving in many roles from president of the Athabasca Chamber of Commerce to teaching the Chess Club at the local high school. He lives with his wife, Vivian, on an acreage just west of Athabasca.

Mr. Ollerenshaw is currently serving his second term on Athabasca University Governing Council as the Academic Staff Member nominated by the Academic Staff Association and sits on the Finance & Property Committee.



Judi Malone (Tutor Member)

Judi Malone is passionate about distance education and Athabasca University and was the 2005 recipient of the *President's Award for Tutoring and Mentoring Excellence*. She has enjoyed teaching for AU at Blue Quills College and tutoring a broad range of distance students in psychology and in women's studies.

Ms. Malone works as a psychologist practicing feminist-existential therapy in a rural private practice and for Health Canada in Frog Lake First Nation. Ms. Malone is both an active lifelong learner and volunteer. Within the psychological community, she is on provincial and national boards and committees and as a journal reviewer. She is also an active volunteer in her home community of St. Paul, Alberta.

Ms. Malone's areas of expertise are rural practice, ethics in counselling women, and having fun while raising her two daughters.

In 1997 Ms. Malone was an AU student and she began tutoring the same course in 2000. Ms. Malone is currently serving her second term on Athabasca University Governing Council as the tutor representative. She is a member of the Honorary Awards, Institutional Advancement and Academic Affairs Committees.

Vacant (Alumnus Member)

Bethany Tynes (Undergraduate Student Member)

Toni Fox (Undergraduate Student Member)



Amanda Nielsen (Graduate Student Member)

Amanda Nielsen is the President of the Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA). She has completed a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) degree from the University of Alberta, and is currently working on her Master of Arts – Integrated Studies degree program with Athabasca University.

Outside of her role as AUGSA President, Amanda works at NAIT as a Prospective Student Advisor. Previously, she has worked for the University of Alberta Students' Union as a Director for various student services. She is actively involved with the community, and volunteers with Big Brothers Big Sisters and her Toastmasters Club.

Amanda Nielsen is serving her first term on Athabasca University Governing Council and serves as a member of the Finance & Property, Institutional Advancement and Academic Affairs Committees.

Carla Yeaman (Nonacademic Staff Member)

Carla Yeaman is an Undergraduate Program Advisor for the School of Business at Athabasca University, and is also an AU student, working towards her Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations.

Carla is serving her first term on Athabasca University Governing Council as the member of the non-academic staff of Athabasca University nominated by the non-academic staff, and serves as a member on the Institutional Advancement and Honorary Awards Committees.