

The AMS Strategic Framework

Purpose

The Alma Mater Society exists to serve the aspirations of UBC students.

Being a UBC student is harder than ever before. The costs of school and living, the pressure to be successful and the challenge of competing with our fellow students are greater than the previous generations that followed the Great Trek to UBC. Collectively we face enormous change in our lives and in our institution. This is not the University of our parents. UBC is pushing itself further to be one of the world's leading research universities and its students are pushing themselves for the privilege of attending it by being excellent students, working part-time to pay for their studies, and trying to live a balanced life. In the face of these monumental life pressures, an organization that exists to make this time for students easier is a necessity.

As we prepare ourselves to be global leaders, the responsibility of the Alma Mater Society, "to improve the quality of the educational, social and personal lives of the students of UBC" is ever present. Every student at UBC is part of the Alma Mater Society and the Alma Mater Society is the manifestation of our shared student experience—our successes are its successes and its successes are our successes. We support the Alma Mater Society not because we are supporting an authority but because we are supporting ourselves.

Through advocacy, student services, event programming and our businesses, our Alma Mater Society provides opportunity and work-life balance to our fellow students of UBC so that we can all succeed in life but also so we can take ownership over our time at the University of British Columbia.

We do this because this is Our Alma Mater.

The AMS Strategic Plan is our guide and our commitment. It pledges the Alma Mater Society to actively engage UBC students in its development so that it can better serve their aspirations. It is the guide for the Executive and AMS Council to act proactively with an eye to long-term planning so the status of students in our University is constantly improved and so we can strengthen our status in the world. The AMS Strategic Plan also focuses on the measurement of outcomes so that the Alma Mater Society can act transparently and accountably in the pursuit of its mission. As students we deserve the tools to hold our student leaders to task but also the tools to aid in our responsibility to contribute to the aspirations of our fellow students.

Values

Constituents

The Alma Mater Society commits to actively engage constituents in its ongoing development. The AMS will seek a two-way relationship with the students that are its constituency and help them become active participants in the goals and activities of the Society.

Resources

The Alma Mater Society commits to developing sustainable, independent financial and staff resources to serve its constituents. The Society will build diverse streams of revenue to enable it to provide services needed by AMS constituents, independent of the University's decisions and actions and commits to fostering a positive environment for working, volunteering and professional development.

Stewardship

The Alma Mater Society commits to good governance. It will foster professional governance structures that are accessible, transparent, accountable, and forward-thinking, working seamlessly towards the primary mandate of serving evolving constituent needs over the long-term.

Community

The Alma Mater Society recognizes the need for community partnerships in order to be an effective organization for its student constituents. To this end, the AMS commits to actively build relationships and engage in effective dialogue with external entities that directly impact the student collective. In addition, the AMS will seek out and foster alliances with external organizations that will enable the AMS to better serve their constituency.

Sustainability

The Alma Mater Society commits to being a community leader in sustainability, ensuring the ability to serve generations of students to come. Through research, partnership, and operational changes the Society will demonstrate leadership by shrinking our ecological and footprint and fostering social justice.

Measuring Outcomes

Constituents

1. The Alma Mater Society will engage constituents in its development by discovering strategies and vehicles that promote greater constituent direction of the Society. The AMS will monitor its progress towards greater constituent involvement by tracking:
 - a. the number of constituents involved in the government of the Society;
 - b. the retention and levels of commitment of constituents participating in AMS governance.

2. The Society will not rely solely upon priorities generated by student leaders but will actively consult the student collective to determine what is important to all its constituents. It will measure its success in establishing these constituent priorities by:
 - a. the number of usable ideas coming from constituents outside its governing bodies;
 - b. the number of groups and individuals contributing ideas and the number of ideas contributed -- gauging the diversity and frequency of idea sources;
 - c. assessing constituent satisfaction with the AMS's contribution to their lives.

3. The Society will encourage increased constituent involvement in its governance structures. It will gauge its success in this by monitoring:
 - a. constituents' knowledge of AMS governance structures;
 - b. voter turnout and how it compares to peer institutions;
 - c. numbers of candidates running in AMS elections;
 - d. the number of constituencies represented in governance structures;
 - e. the number of vacant seats in governance structures.

Resources

1. The Alma Mater Society will build diversity into its revenue streams to ensure the sustainable provision of professional representation and services to its constituents. It will judge its performance in building sustainability through monitoring:
 - a. the stability of the Society's core financial revenues -- its fees, businesses, and continuing sponsorship agreement revenues;

- b.** the percentage of growth in independent services and products -- those revenues which the Society' decisions will effect outcomes, rather than the political decisions of other entities;
 - c.** the number and lifespan of non-independent revenue sources, such as University or other grants and time-limited sponsorship contracts.
- 2.** The Society will value those who contribute to it through their work as staff and as volunteers. It will measure its performance through gauging:
 - a.** the percentage of employee turnover and the resulting recruitment, training and integration costs;
 - b.** the percentage of volunteer turnover including effects on program delivery and completion, and costs of training;
 - c.** meaningful opportunities for staff and volunteer professional development and advancement.
- 3.** The Society will utilize its resources to serve the aspirations of students, measuring its success through:
 - a.** the percentage of utilization of and opt-out from AMS services;
 - b.** monitoring the frequency of usage, and number of unique clients, of AMS services, programs and businesses, including the initial establishment of a baseline for their analysis;
 - c.** conducting regular qualitative satisfaction surveys and consultations.

Stewardship

- 1.** The Alma Mater Society will build effective governance structures designed to meet constituents' needs. These shall reduce duplication, increase coordination between governing bodies and create ease of access for constituents. AMS progress in building these structures through:
 - a.** tracking the number of steps and length of time required for common functions and requests to be processed and completed;
 - b.** regular satisfaction surveys and consultations;
 - c.** number of constituents participating in consultations, such as focus groups, public meetings and public displays for soliciting feedback.
- 2.** The Society commits to developing the framework and processes required to enable strategic planning and implementation to occur over the medium and long-term. It will as part of this process:
 - a.** establish, monitor and review performance benchmarks as outlined in the Strategic Plan as a means to measure its achievements;

- b.** track the number and quality of baseline performance indicators obtained;
 - c.** track time and financial resources required to implement the strategic planning process.
- 3.** To build the AMS brand, the Society commits to distinguishing the AMS to their constituents, and their ownership of it, as a valuable entity distinct from the university administration. The AMS will continue to monitor:
- a.** the percentage of its constituents who are aware that the AMS is distinct from UBC;
 - b.** constituents knowledge levels of AMS services, programs and businesses;
 - c.** the number of visitors to the AMS and subsidiary websites;
 - d.** numbers of AMS Insiders and other AMS publications that are distributed;
 - e.** numbers of on and off campus news stories and headlines about the AMS;
 - f.** requests for interviews from news media;
 - g.** requests for advertising space;
 - h.** recognition of the AMS in events that it sponsors.

Community

- 1.** The Alma Mater Society will engage with the UBC administration, the provincial and federal governments for the services, resources and legislation which allow the AMS to exist and upon whom its constituents are in part dependent for their success. It will track this progress through:
- a.** the number of documented discussions and dialogues with, as well as requests from, government and the University administration;
 - b.** the percentage of issues pursued by the AMS that are positively realized and the amount of time and resources devoted to their realization;
- 2.** The Society will build alliances with external organizations to better serves the interests of its constituents. Such organizations, such as student societies or community groups, can be a source of knowledge and support in working towards broad student objectives. The AMS will track:
- a.** its external partnerships, including the number, type and size, as well as their overall value to the Society;
 - b.** its sponsorships and endorsements, including the number, type and size, as well as their overall value to the Society.

Sustainability

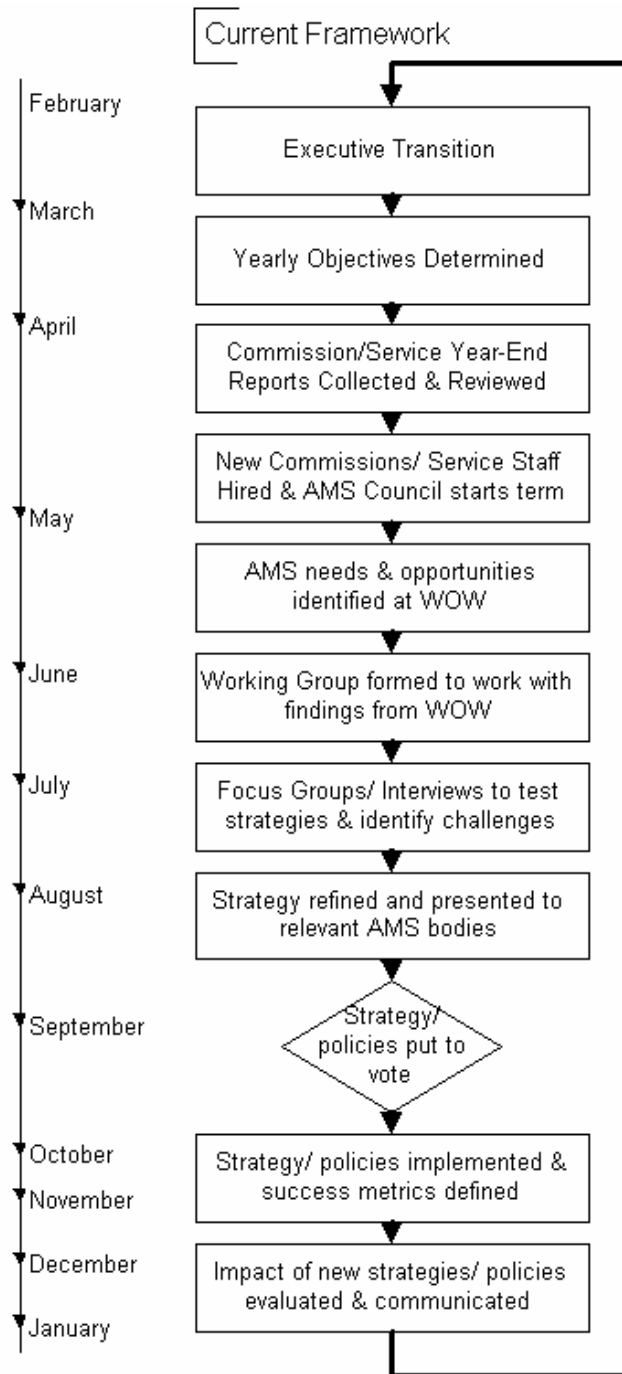
1. The Alma Mater Society will research environmental best practices to set performance targets for an ever smaller ecological footprint. The AMS will monitor progress towards establishing performance targets by tracking:
 - a. The number of areas of possible performance measurement
 - b. The establishment of baseline measures in the identified measurement areas
 - c. The identification of best practices in the identified measurement areas
 - d. The establishment of best practices benchmark targets in those areas

2. The Alma Mater Society will reduce its environmental impact by implementing initiatives independently and through partnership that make changes in the areas identified. The AMS will gauge success by:
 - a. AMS yearly performance against the baseline and benchmark targets
 - b. The number of shared initiatives implemented with other organizations
 - c. Performance or impact of the partnership programs against project targets

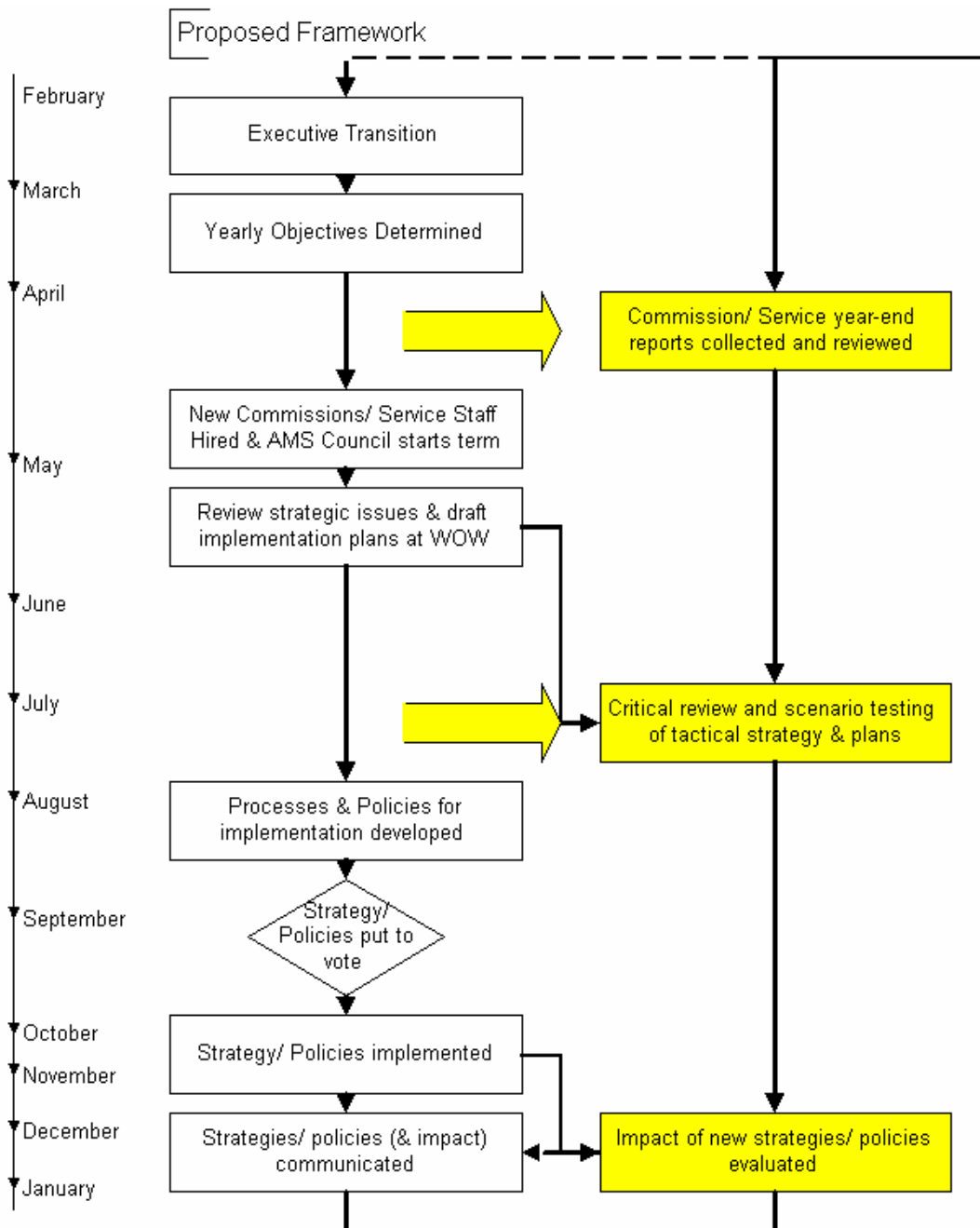
3. The Alma Mater Society will support the creation of a more sustainable community by engaging with its own membership, other student groups, external organizations, the UBC administration, and the provincial and federal governments to increase sustainability IQ. The AMS will track progress by measuring:
 - a. AMS presence in sustainability-related events and initiatives
 - b. Membership awareness about the AMS sustainability goals and accomplishments
 - c. Employee knowledge of and engagement in sustainable practices
 - d. Number of members drawing on AMS sustainability resources and services

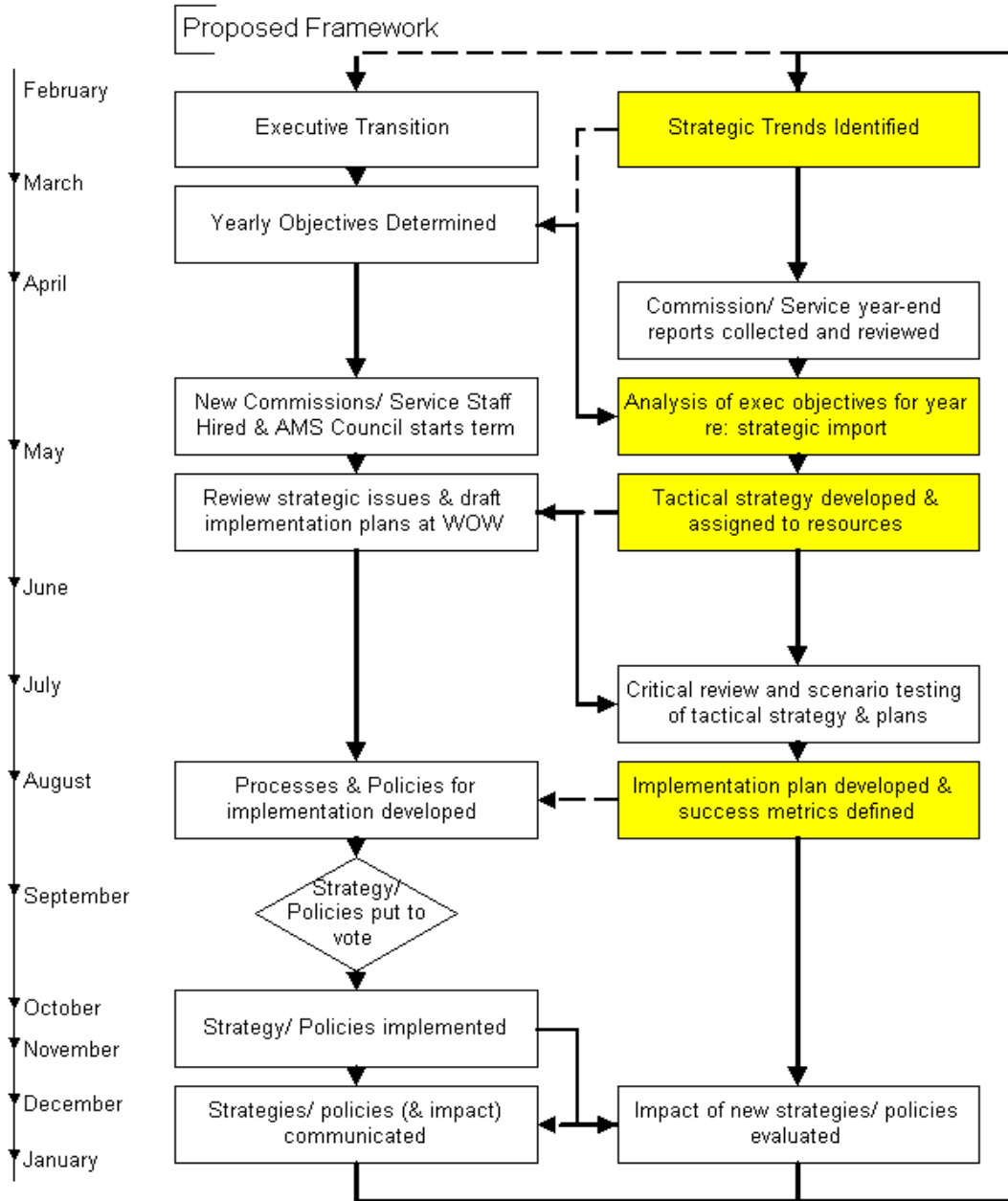
The Strategic Planning Process

The present planning process, which is tied to the AMS executive's term of office, is annually compressed into a six month period and results in the lack of a continuous strategic planning cycle. This stop and start of the planning process is costly and time consuming for the organization because it leads to repetition.



The institution of a continuous year-long Strategic Planning Cycle within the AMS will provide the society with research, analysis and long-term planning that exists in parallel and independent of the AMS executive's and council's timelines. The collection, review, analysis and evaluation of information will become a consistent objective allowing a focus on operations, planning, implementing and communicating – with these functions being linked to the political mandates of the AMS executive and council.





The Strategic Planning Cycle will give the Society sustainability in its strategic initiatives, flexible opportunities to collect information from constituents, and research and analysis not strictly dependent on strategic decisions. It will provide a framework to allow the identification of trends, analysis of executive objectives and develop tactical, strategic and implementation plans for the organization.

The Strategic Planning Cycle will allow the AMS greater flexibility and the ability to become more nimble in its response to changes initiated by its constituents and external factors.

Resources Required for Successful Implementation

A continuous Strategic Planning Cycle will require dedicated resources if it is to be successful. In the short term, it is possible that current AMS staff and elected representative personnel could initiate the Strategic Planning Cycle. The long term establishment of a Strategic Planning Cycle will require the AMS to create a Strategic Information Office with allocated staff, space, and resources.

Annual Strategic Planning Cycle Timeline

	Constituents – The AMS commits to actively engage constituents in its ongoing development.	Resources – The AMS commits to developing sustainable independent financial and staff resources to serve its constituents.	Stewardship – The AMS commits to good governance.	Community – The AMS recognizes the need for community partnerships in order to be an effective organization for its student constituents	Sustainability – The AMS commits to being a community leader in sustainability, ensuring the ability to serve generations of students to come
May	Develop implementation plan and pass proposed strategies in Council		Identify existing governance indicators tracked at the AMS	Review existing external partnerships and sponsorships	Review existing sustainability targets and progress made to date
June	Determine performance measures	Define performance baseline measures for staff positions	Identify and audit key/ popular administrative and bureaucratic functions		Determine sustainability priorities for the year and create an implementation plan
July	Implementation of passed strategy	Review existing performance data from businesses and services			Implementation of proposed annual plan
August			Research performance indicators from different post-secondary student societies		
September	Gather constituent baseline data	Gather utilization and satisfaction data from businesses and services			Begin class research projects

October				Plan objectives for provincial lobbying event Organize and schedule lobbying event details	Update to Council on progress made on implementation of the annual plan
November				Document lobbying activity arising from CASA LobbyCon	Develop tracking systems in the businesses and administration for sustainability indicators
December	Gather governance performance data				
January	Gather governance performance	Gather utilization and satisfaction data from businesses and services	Gather satisfaction data from constituents Collect data to satisfy other indicators		
February	Analyse governance performance data	Measure and analyse AMS revenue streams		Document lobbying activity arising from provincial lobbying event	
March	Define priorities regarding constituent engagement and involvement	Review grants and contracts Define resource development priorities	Define priorities in regards to AMS governance structures Conduct consultation with constituents	Define priorities regarding government relations Define priorities regarding external partnerships, sponsorships, and endorsements	Measure and analyse sustainability data measured throughout the year
April	Identify structures and strategies to engage constituents	Develop human resource tools to track recruitment/ retention/ turnover Develop tools to collect required service and business data	Identify structures and processes to improve society function and operation	Develop tracking strategies and tools to measure effectiveness of AMS policies Identify policies required to facilitate community and external goals	Create an annual report on progress made