



Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026

Mission

ANSUT advocates for the quality, accessibility, and academic integrity of post-secondary education. It believes that such education is a right, not a privilege, and it represents its members in maintaining and improving the autonomy and diversity of their individual institutions to those ends. ANSUT strives to strengthen and improve the work of individual faculty associations.

Vision

ANSUT aims to provide its member Associations with the strongest possible voice on post-secondary education issues in the province of Nova Scotia, and to advance its mission by engaging the active participation of its member institutions.

Research/History

ANSUT was founded in 1997, following the dissolution of the Nova Scotia Confederation of University Faculty Associations (NSCUFA). By 1999 its membership had expanded to include the academic staff associations of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Mount Saint Vincent University, Saint Francis Xavier University, Université Sainte-Anne, and what was then the University College of Cape Breton. As a result of this increase in membership, the initial provision that ANSUT members would include both academic staff associations and individual members from non-member associations was eliminated. Subsequent applications for membership from the associations of the Atlantic School of Theology, Acadia University, and Saint Mary's University were approved, and in 2001 ANSUT was admitted to membership of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) as an officially recognized provincial association. It currently represents over half the academic staff in the province.

The Strategic Plan Committee contacted presidents of each member faculty association and created a schedule to meet in person during April and May 2020. These plans were scuttled by the COVID-19 shut-down. In September, each Faculty Association president was asked to meet virtually with the Committee. The executive committees of 6 member associations attended these meeting, one faculty association contributed their input by email, and one faculty association did not respond.

SWOT Analysis

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides local perspective • Good media profile • Current structure provides increased professionalism • Better public presence • Provides “loud” voice/voice on big issues on behalf of all members • Less personal to admin than individual FAs • Info sharing 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ability to translate materials to French for members • Members may not be aware of ANSUT – communications may stop at exec • Great meetings, no follow-up • Potential overlap with CAUT • Lobbying provincial gov’t – not listened to • Current structure – how could it change to be more effective • Geared to faculty, not techs, librarians, etc • Lack of social media use • Timeliness of acting on opportunities
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other unions may join (DFA, CUPE 3912, etc) • Social media • Act as provincial voice to build reputation as PSE voice • To drive research on PSE topics • To foster support network of other unions (NSGEU, PSAC, UNIFOR, etc) 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporatization of Boards and academic departments by admin • Budget/Lack of resources • Occasional lack of agreement on how to proceed w/issues (fisheries letter) • Damage to reputation when projects do not go well (Int Student Conference) • Insufficient gov’t funding for PSE • PSE is not a top priority for Gov’t/public • Lack of willingness to include PSE at gov’t tables

Competitive Advantage

As the sole provincial body advocating for post-secondary education issues in Nova Scotia for its 8 member associations, ANSUT is uniquely positioned to become a valued voice on issues concerning PSE from a faculty perspective. ANSUT is one of several similar provincial advocacy associations, and has created ties with others across the country, including FNBFA (Federation of



New Brunswick Faculty Association) and with CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers).

Although ANSUT has existed for over 20 years, the organization is still relatively unknown to the PSE playing field, especially among government and university administration organizations such as the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP), the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) and EduNova. This has changed slightly in the past four years, with more frequent correspondence and meetings with government officials in the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, and with individual university administrations.

ANSUT continues to foster positive relationships with unions who are not currently members of ANSUT, such as the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA), CUPE 3912, and the Nova Scotia Community College Academic Union (NSCCAU), and with other labour organizations such as the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL), Nova Scotia Government Employees Union (NSGEU) and Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC).

ANSUT has built a positive relationship with the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia (CFS-NS) and will continue to communicate with Students Nova Scotia (SNS).

Priorities

Based on the work covered by ANSUT Council in the last 4 years, requests for service from ANSUT members, and input from 40 members of the faculty associations' executive committees, the strategic priorities for this plan are clear:

1. Engage members
2. Advocate for PSE
3. Support social justice
4. Provide learning opportunities

Goals

To that end, over the next five years, ANSUT will

1. Engage members
 - actively seek new members
 - increase engagement with current members
 - encourage stronger relationships between other PSE unions and student groups
 - build awareness of ANSUT by increasing visibility to key stakeholders
2. Advocate for PSE

- actively seek out areas of interest, and lead at least one research project per year that provides members with data relevant to their PSE needs.
 - provide a strong, public voice to government, university administrations and others as necessary to advance concerns for PSE challenges and opportunities, including in the leadup to provincial elections and provincial budget planning
 - foster open communication with university administrations
 - gather current data on PSE trends
3. Support social justice
- create clear messaging that reflects ANSUT's desire to improve equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility
 - actively advocate for people who are treated inequitably in PSE, and all sectors.
4. Provide learning opportunities
- Identify areas of interest to members and organize at least two workshops, training and information sessions per year.

Timeline & Evaluation

A practical timeline and evaluation metrics for the strategic plan goals will be outlined in an annual communication plan prepared for each goal. Accurate and useful evaluation metrics, including criteria to gauge success, timing, and measures for each objective, will be adapted from the reaction/learning/transfer/impact pyramid model created by Kirkpatrick in his book *Evaluating training programs: the four levels*, with the overreaching evaluations goal being the impact of providing a strong public voice for PSE and creating awareness of ANSUTⁱ. Progress will be evaluated quarterly by the Communications Manager, and annually by the Strategic Plan subcommittee, with review by ANSUT Council and adaptation of the plan as necessary. At conclusion of the plan, the subcommittee will conduct a final evaluation for ANSUT Council.

Approved by ANSUT Council, May 28, 2021

ⁱ Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994). *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.