Planning

Planning ASLS 2017 was a joint effort between the student planning committee, staff mentors, Students’ Union (SU) staff, and members of both the university and broader communities on the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee participated in a one day planning retreat in June 2016 to lay the foundations for ASLS 2017. They selected the theme, created recommendations for keynote speakers and shared ideas to improve the involvement fair. Their participation continued throughout the year through email newsletters and participating in polls.

Enhancing meaningful student involvement in planning was a focus for the 2017 summit and led to the creation of the ASLS student planning committee. Students were invited to apply to serve as one of six directors on the planning committee and manage various portfolios. The students selected rose to the challenge and did a phenomenal job, both individually and as a team. They brought innovative ideas to the table and outstanding energy.

Dylan McAtee Director of Programming
Sherry Gao Director of Volunteers
Thi Duong Director of Conference Events
Felicia Truong Director of Digital Outreach
Julie Moysiuw Director of Community Outreach
Emily Gregory Director of the Graduate Students Committee

“It was an honour to work with this team and I would love to again!” — Student Director

The directors were supported by a staff mentor throughout the planning process as well as by the SU staff in coordinating and executing the conference.

We look forward to continuing this level of student engagement for ASLS 2018!

Photo credits: Janelle Dudzic

Overview of the Day

Pre-Conference

This year ASLS hosted a “Networking 101” session before the social with the Dale Carnegie Group. The session offered delegates strategies and techniques to network effectively which they employed throughout the conference.

The pre-conference event created space for delegates to meet each other in an informal and celebratory setting. The pre-conference social’s theme was Superheroes and included games, facilitated discussions and food.

Networking

ASLS kicked off with facilitated networking time. As delegates arrived, they were greeted by a team of facilitation volunteers who would facilitate discussions and encourage participants to engage with new people. Creating space for delegates to meet one another was a response to feedback from last year and promoted a sense of community amongst the delegates.

Morning Keynote

Waneek Horn-Miller was the 2017 opening keynote for ASLS. Her talk explored the intersections of courage and leadership in various situations, and encouraged reflection about the meaning of reconciliation. Her stories were inspirational and gave delegates a great deal to think about.

Concurrent Sessions

The concurrent sessions covered a range of topics including comfort in discomfort, social justice, and self awareness. Presenters were community members and students with ideas and experiences to share about leadership. The sessions varied from theoretical to highly interactive, and all thought-provoking. With twenty-three sessions offered there was something for everyone!

Involvement Fair

The Involvement Fair was back by popular demand this year and twice the size! It featured over 20 organizations that offer practical leadership opportunities. The groups included government, not-for-profit, political, and community organizations. Delegates had time to discuss opportunities with representatives and meet other like minded folks.

Closing Keynote

Jack Saddleback closed this year’s conference with a moving talk on the courage needed to be yourself. He shared his story of being a trans, two-spirited indigenous man who overcame social barriers and mental health challenges. He shared his story of perseverance and encouraged the audience to consider how they can make their communities more inclusive for everyone.

The day closed with a spoken word performance by Elena Macasinag. The poem captured the essence of ASLS and provided a beautiful finish to the day.
Participant Experience

Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive for ASLS 2017. During the conference, delegates took to social media to share their experiences at the conference. Here are a few reflection tweets from the day:

#ASLS2017 Thanks for such a nice Leadership Learning Experience :) Really Liked the Idea behind. Loved The Gift I got from the Presenter! (Jagrill Bajwa)

Learning how to confront privilege, racism and have difficult conversations aka how to combat Trumpism #ASLS2017 #ualberta (Katelyn Trieu)

Getting ready to start the Alberta Student Leadership Summit. Loving the amazing swag so far #ASLS2017 (Lorisia MacLeod)

Participants’ response to ASLS 2017 highlighted learning and delegate engagement. 75% of delegates felt ASLS met their expectation considerably or a great deal and 70% have already or plan to take on additional leadership positions. One of the focuses for this year’s ASLS was to encourage relationship building amongst delegates and we were thrilled that over 87% met someone new through ASLS. The over 75% say they would recommend ASLS to a friend, suggests that ASLS is a valuable opportunity for students across Alberta!

We look forward to using the feedback from this year to strengthen the 2017 program. In particular we are excited to increase the number of community presenters and offer additional mentorship opportunities to new presenters.

“The highlight would have to be Waneek Horn-Miller keynote! It was an amazing talk, and personally spoke to me a lot, in regards to her story and pushing boundaries/becoming a leader.” - Delegate

Demographics

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<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Domestic students</th>
<th>International students</th>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Support

Funding for ASLS was generously provided by a number of sponsors and supporters. Students engaged with the sponsors in a range of ways including over social media, at the involvement fair and during the keynotes.

We would like to sincerely thank all our sponsors for helping make ASLS possible!

Sponsors

StudentCare
University of Alberta Students’ Union
Peter Lougheed Leadership College
The Landing
University of Alberta Residence Services

Grants

University of Alberta Alumni Student
aEngagement Grant

In-kind

LiveWell
Culligan Water
Create Awesome Meetings
Nadine Riopel

Sustainable Initiatives

Like last year, the Alberta Student Leadership Summit was held in the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science, which possesses the LEED® Silver certification. ASLS committed to numerous sustainable event planning practices, including:

- Purchasing all branded conference materials from suppliers committed to using fair-trade, recycled and organic materials in production, as well as fair labour practices.
- Providing water-bottle refill stations and packaging-free snacks such as fruit to delegates throughout the day.
- Limiting the amount of paper materials provided to delegates in their materials.
- Providing a full suite of waste diversion stations.

Looking to 2018

Next year we look forward to incorporating more professional workshops and sessions during the day. This will enable ASLS to offer skill development to delegates and meet a broad range of interests.

The student planning committee this year did a phenomenal job in planning the conference and we look forward to building on that experience. We will be reviewing and redefining the roles based on feedback from the directors this year and offering the opportunity to more students in the coming year.
The Alberta Student Leadership Summit (ASLS) is a province wide conference for student leaders from secondary and postsecondary institutions. The third year of ASLS was co-hosted by the University of Alberta (U of A) and the Students’ Union on Saturday, January 28th. The 2017 theme, Harnessing Courage, encouraged delegates to explore the importance of taking risks and adhering to your values to make a difference in their community.

This year ASLS aimed to reduce barriers and offer development opportunities for current and future student leaders. The keynote speakers shared stories of courage and offered living proof of what can be achieved through discomfort. The concurrent sessions provided tangible skills and critical reflection for participants looking to enhance their leadership. Facilitated networking time was featured throughout the conference to promote relationships and community as crucial to responsible leadership.

**We would like to thank all the students and staff who participated in the planning process!**