Alberta Association of Academic Libraries

AAAL 2026 Spring AGM Meeting Agenda and Package

Spring 2026 AGM, 24 April 2026, *9:00 AM - 3:45 PM MST*
Lethbridge University - 4401 University Dr W, Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4

Room: Markin Hall Atrium, Link to Map

Parking: Paid Parking is available on campus; Lot N (Section 4) has full-day parking, and Lot E/G has 2-hour parking (Link to Campus Parking Map & Rates).

Parking passes can be purchased using the Honk Mobile app.

Wi-Fi: *Guest Network and Eduroam options available onsite.*

Nearby Accommodations: Sandman Signature Lodge: *Reserved rate of $122 + tax per night*.

To Make Individual Reservations: Call 24-hour Central Reservations office at 1-800-726-3626/ 1-800-SANDMAN. In order to receive the correct rates, callers must reference:

- Sandman Signature Lethbridge Lodge
- Group Name: The AB Association of Academic Libraries
- Block ID: 642021
- Block code: AAOAL2026

A valid credit card is required at the time of reservation to secure any guest rooms.

Meal and Refreshments: Continental Breakfast, Coffee Break, Lunch, and afternoon refreshments will be served. Please view the full menu here.

AAAL Executive Contact Information	aaal.executive@gmail.com
Chair:	Andrea Johnston, Red Deer Polytechnic
Chair-Elect:	Celine Gareau-Brennan, University of Alberta
Treasurer:	Yvonne Phillips, Red Deer Polytechnic
Secretary:	Sheena Sereda, NorQuest College
Past Chair:	Jane Duffy, MacEwan University
Communications Committee	Caitlin Ratcliffe, NorQuest College
(Web, News & Social Media)	Meghan Staal, University of Alberta
aaal.communications@gmail.com	Tessa Broadhead, King's University
Mentorship Committee	Roxy Garstad, MacEwan University; Chair
aaal.mentorship@gmail.com	Sarah Chomyc, University of Alberta
	Holly Hoffman, St. Mary's University
	Ron Rooth, MacEwan University
	Shaun McMullen, Portage College
Statistics and Assessment Committee	Adam Cohen, Mount Royal University
aaal.assess@gmail.com	Jenn Laskosky, Concordia University of Edmonton
	Emily Villanueva, University of Lethbridge
Learning and Development Committee	Ali Foster, MacEwan University; Chair
	Emma Scott, University of Lethbridge
	Christena McKillop, University of Calgary
	Dana Ouellette, University of Alberta
	Rynnelle Wiebe, Medicine Hat College

Morning Schedule of Events

8:30 am – 9:15 am: **Registration, Continental Breakfast (Coffee/Tea, Fruit, Pastries), & Socializing**

9:15 am – 9:45 am: **Business Meeting**

- Host Welcome and Land Acknowledgement (3 minutes)
- Approval of Spring 2026 Agenda (1 minute)
- Approval of Minutes of the Fall 2025 Meeting (Link to Meeting Minutes) (1 minute)
- Verbal Reports (10 minutes)
    - Executive Committee
    - AAAL Subcommittees
- *Voting (15 minutes) (links will take you to information about the changes)*
    - AAAL Chair Elect
    - Approval of Membership Fees, 2026-2027
    - Approval of Bylaws Updates (1 of 2)
    - Approval of Bylaw Updates (2 of 2)- Fiscal year end.
        - Voting on changing the fiscal year from May 1 to April 30, to April 1 to March 31.

9:45 am - 10:45 am: **Roundtable Updates (changes, announcements, programs, etc.)**

- 2 minutes per institutional representative (Andrea Johnston to moderate)
- **Please send your reports to aaal.executive@aaal.ca so we can accurately capture them in the meeting minutes.**

10:45 am - 11:00 am: **Break**

11:00 am - 12:00 pm: **Keynote Speaker**

On Teaching (Epistemic) Trustworthiness

Dr. Susan Dieleman, University of Lethbridge, Jarislowsky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership

Dr. Dieleman joined the University of Lethbridge in 2023 as Associate Professor of Philosophy and the inaugural Jarislowsky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership. Her research is located at the intersections of pragmatism, political philosophy, and feminist philosophy, with a focus on whether and how to make democracies more inclusive and more just. She is co-editor of *The Ethics of Richard Rorty: Moral Communities, Self-Transformation, and Imagination* (Routledge, 2022) and *Pragmatism and Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2017) and co-author of the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on Richard Rorty. Her most recent publications include "Norms and Novelty in the Space of Reasons" (*European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy*, 2025), "Trust in Political Leaders as Trustworthiness" (*Politics and Governance,* 2025), and "Who Are We When We are 'Us, at Our Best'?" (*Philosophy and Social Criticism,* 2025).

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm: **Lunch break**

*******Lunch break will include opportunities to tour the University of Lethbridge Library, including an Open House of Archives & Special Collections***

1:30 pm - 2:00 pm: **Presentation**

Many Hands, One Search Box: A decentralized approach to discovery and system migration

Abigail Sparling & Natasha Nunn, University of Alberta

Navigating large-scale discovery migrations, particularly during periods of fiscal constraint and organizational change, requires a strategic blend of technical expertise and collaborative leadership. This presentation explores the University of Alberta Library's (UAL) decentralized discovery model, which brings together a technical team responsible for system configuration, a targeted consultation group, and broader library-wide engagement.

We will review UAL's migration from Symphony/EDS to Alma/Primo VE, a transition that drew on cross-disciplinary expertise in UX, metadata, systems, and information services. During the migration, we sought to increase buy-in and improve system functionality by creating structured feedback loops, including interactive workshops, surveys, a monitored feedback channel, and comprehensive staff documentation.

Participants will learn how these strategies are actively shaping our migration to the New Discovery Experience (Primo NDE) and how we continue to leverage library-wide engagement through A/B testing and iterative interface changes.

Key takeaways:

- Manage your discovery system by leveraging existing expertise in discovery-adjacent areas such as UX, cataloguing/metadata and system administration.
- Implement decentralized feedback loops to increase staff buy-in during system migrations.
- Build consensus and engagement through complex systems change.

Natasha Nunn (she/her) is the Digital User Experience Librarian at the U of A Library, where she leads the Web Team, the Technical Discovery Team, and chairs the Accessibility Committee. She is passionate about creating inclusive and accessible digital experiences for students.

Abigail Sparling (she/her) is the Electronic Resources and Discovery Metadata Librarian and co-lead of the Technical Discovery Team at the University of Alberta Library. Abigail specializes in optimizing Electronic Resource Management (ERM) workflows and developing sustainable metadata strategies. Her work focuses on bridging the gap between complex technical infrastructure and seamless user discovery.

2:00 pm - 2:25 pm: **Lightning Talks**

Supporting Digital Creation and Emerging Technologies in an Academic Library

Rob Horlacher, University of Lethbridge

Academic libraries are not just spaces to study, research, and find books; they are spaces where students create, experiment, and bring ideas to life. This lightning talk highlights how the University of Lethbridge Library is helping students explore digital media and emerging technologies in hands-on ways, grounded by the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.

Students can explore immersive experiences in a virtual reality room, create projects on high-end computers, and check out equipment ranging from cameras to audio recorders to 3D scanners. One-on-one support and invited classroom workshops guide students through podcasting, video creation, 3D modelling, and poster design, while asynchronous modules let them learn skills on their own time.

These offerings help students develop digital skills, critically engage with information, and communicate ideas effectively. Attendees will see concrete examples and gain insights into how academic libraries can support learning, skill development, and student engagement with digital and emerging technologies.

Rob Horlacher (he/him) is an Instructional Designer at the University of Lethbridge Library. In his position, Rob plays a key role in Project Sandbox, a digital and emerging technologies initiative. Rob's background consists of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in New Media from the University of Lethbridge and a Master of Education degree in Educational Research with a specialization in Adult Learning from the University of Calgary.

Scholarly Communication on the Fediverse

Karen Keiller, MacEwan University

Dreaming of social media and scholarly communications away from toxic social media? This is a call to action for librarians to help our faculty colleagues learn about scholarly communication on the fediverse. What better way to begin than finding your own community? You'll learn about some resources to find academic instances of Mastodon (and others), finding scholars to follow, and (briefly) be introduced to the concept of a university instance (for example, https://social.edu.nl/public/local).

Karen Keiller (she/her) has had an account on indieweb.social since November 2022. She is the Dean, Library at MacEwan University Library and has worked in academic libraries in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Saint John, New Brunswick, Thunder Bay, Ontario, and now is in Edmonton. She is on a mission to introduce folks to the fediverse and stop librarians (she has to start somewhere) from using Google as a verb for searching.

2:25 pm - 2:40 pm: **Afternoon Break with Refreshments**

2:40 pm - 3:10 pm: **Presentation**

Modernizing Legacy Library Systems: Implementing Two Digital Projects at Athabasca University with AI-Assisted Development

Bill Geng, Athabasca University

Many academic libraries maintain locally developed digital systems with interfaces created years earlier. As institutional web standards evolve, these systems often fall out of alignment with current branding, accessibility requirements, and user experience expectations, even though their underlying infrastructure remains functional.

This presentation shares a practical modernization project undertaken at Athabasca University Library to redesign two long-standing digital platforms:

- Athabasca Area Seniors' Memory Project(AASMP): http://digiport.athabascau.ca/aasmp/
- Digital Theses and Project Room (DTPR): https://dtpr.lib.athabascau.ca/

Rather than replacing these systems, the projects focused on revitalizing the user interface and presentation layer while maintaining the existing technical infrastructure. The redesign addressed outdated visual design, improved accessibility and usability, and aligned both systems with the university's current web branding.

A key aspect of the project was the integration of AI-assisted development tools into the library web design workflow. The implementation process included:

- UX and interface design in Figma, following institutional branding and accessibility guidelines
- AI-assisted code generation using tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Grok to rapidly convert design components into front-end code
- Iterative refinement and testing to ensure compatibility with the existing systems while improving usability and visual clarity

This case study demonstrates how academic libraries can efficiently modernize legacy digital projects without large redevelopment efforts. It also explores how emerging AI-assisted development practices can support small library teams in maintaining and improving digital services.

The session will present the design workflow, implementation strategy, and lessons learned, providing practical guidance for libraries seeking to modernize their own legacy digital platforms.

Participants will:

- Identify strategies for modernizing legacy library web systems without full system replacement
- Understand how Figma-based design workflows can support library digital project redesign
- Explore practical uses of AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Grok) in front-end development for library platforms
- Gain insights into aligning digital library services with institutional branding, usability, and accessibility standards

Bill Geng joined the AU Library in 2008 as a programmer and has since held several roles with increasing responsibility. He now serves as Associate University Librarian, Digital Initiatives, where he leads the development and stewardship of digital projects, services, and platforms. His work advances the library's digital strategy and supports its evolution as a digital-first institution.

3:10 pm - 3:35 pm: **Lightning Talks**

Accessible Library Instruction: 7 Tips in 7 Minutes

Kait McClary, Keyano College

Approximately 27% of Canadians have a disability, which means that chances are, a student attending your workshop or one-shot instruction session may require additional support. Without necessarily knowing about students' disabilities or any accommodations that they may have in place, how can you ensure that your instruction reaches everyone?

Drawing on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Kait will introduce seven simple strategies for improving accessibility in instruction, with reflection on how these strategies have impacted her teaching over the past academic year.

Kait McClary (she/her) is the Reference Librarian at the Keyano College Library in northern Alberta, where she teaches information literacy to students in the Humanities, Education, Childhood Studies, and Business. She is committed to ensuring that all students have a positive experience when utilizing library resources and services, and has grounded her instruction in Universal Design for Learning principles.

Spreadsheets to Dashboards: Rethinking our Reporting Process

Bryson Duda, University of Lethbridge

A look at how the University of Lethbridge Library Assessment Working Group evaluated Looker Studio, Power BI, and Plotly Dash as possibilities for our statistics reporting and how we ultimately settled on Power BI. Takeaways include a better understanding of the functional differences between the three reporting options, tips for working with Power BI, and some first steps you can take toward modernizing your reporting.

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Bryson Duda (he/him) is a technical specialist at the University of Lethbridge Library. He chairs the Library Assessment Working Group, and in addition to helping with assessment, his duties include web development, technical support, systems administration, automation, and integration.

3:35 pm: **Closing Remarks**

List of Reports

- Chairs Report
- Chair Elect Report
- Treasurer Report
- Learning and Development Committee Report
- Communications Committee Report
- Statistics Committee Report
- Mentorship Committee Report

Chair's Report

What an incredible year for AAAL! I would like to start my report off with a grateful heart, and sincere thanks to my fellow Executive team members, to our incredible Sub-Committee members, and to our community at large for all your hard work, dedication, and heart. It has been an absolute pleasure being the Chair for this past year, and I couldn't be more excited for the future of our organization.

This was a year of lots of changes and new opportunities. In the Fall, I attended the Stronger Together conference and was blown away by the incredible, engaging, and interactive sessions the conference offered. It was a wonderful time to connect with fellow librarians across the province, to become inspired by the work being done in our libraries, and to engage with the greater library community. The conference needs more academic representation so please do consider attending! For added incentive, the Executive team has discussed and approved a PD award for Stronger Together so keep your eyes open for that opportunity!

One of the biggest changes AAAL faced this year was NEOS dissolving and deciding how AAAL could respond. We are very grateful to the NEOS Directors for meeting with our Executive team, sharing their insights, expertise, and guidance. We are also extremely grateful to our Chair-Elect, Céline, for the incredible work she did in interviewing key stakeholders, working with the Directors, and for sharing her findings in the Welcoming and Including NEOS Members to AAAL: A Recommendation Document. We are very excited about the positive direction that AAAL will be taking to become more inclusive, more dynamic, and a stronger organization because of this work. There will be more opportunities to help shape the future of AAAL so stay tuned and join in!

Once again, I would like to say how grateful I am for this incredible community. It has been an honour to serve as Chair, and I look forward to continuing to serve as Past-Chair. We have an incredible leader taking the helm and I am so excited to continue being a part of AAAL's story!

Respectfully submitted by:
Andrea Johnston, Chair.

Chair Elect Report

It's been an absolute pleasure joining the AAAL Executive as Chair-elect this year. I am grateful for my fellow Executive Committee members, and our incredible Sub-Committees members; I am blown away by your competency, insights, and caring for our community.

This year I have worked with the Executive and Sub-Committee members to ensure any open positions are filled, resulting in a healthy association with engaged volunteers. I also acted as back-up and supported Andrea Johnston, the Chair with her duties. Another one of my responsibilities was managing the Professional Development award.

In addition to these normal Chair-Elect duties, I also explored how AAAL could include NEOS members while also enhancing services to our current members with province-wide impact resulting in Welcoming and Including NEOS Members to AAAL: A Recommendation Document. To do so I had discussions with the two special libraries who were part of NEOS and not AAAL, the NEOS Manager, AAAL executive and sub-committee chairs, various NEOS directors and library technicians working at NEOS and AAAL member libraries. Through these conversations, it is suggested that the AAAL commits to recommendations that will enable it to be a welcoming and inclusive library organization for NEOS members and also enhance services to their current members. Thank you to all of those who participated in these efforts! It is because of you that AAAL will be able to innovate and deepen our commitment to our community in the coming years.

Thanks again for a productive and innovative year. I look forward to serving as your Chair this coming year and continuing to collaborate with you all to serve our fantastic community of Library workers!
Respectfully submitted by:
Céline Gareau-Brennan, Chair-Elect

Treasurer Report

The time after the Fall Meeting is generally quiet for the Treasurer - mostly just chasing down the last membership fees! Overall, moving the membership fee due date to October 31 (as opposed to September 30) worked very well. However, moving the fiscal year-end in tandem (to April 30) has proved to be not feasible, as it makes it impossible to present a finished financial statement to the membership in April. For next year, we need to go back to March 31 as the fiscal year-end. Live and learn.

As a mitigation strategy, I am taking advantage of the provision in our Bylaws that says the financial statement can be presented (if need be) at the Fall Meeting. Technically, this

contravenes the Societies Act (the statement needs to be presented at an AGM), but we are not quite following all of the rules as it is.

Having said that, the financial statement will be done by April 30 and AAAL needs two volunteer auditors from the AAAL membership to review and approve the 2025-2026 financial statement.

If you are at all interested or have questions about what this entails, please reach out to the AAAL Executive at aaal.executive@gmail.com. Ideally the audit needs to be completed by May 31 but even by the end of June would be okay.

As of this writing, our 2025-2026 revenue totalled **$4,938.85** from membership fees and bank interest, and our expenses totalled **$3,300.14** due to meeting expenses and software costs. By far the largest expense is catering for the Spring AGMs. The current balance is a healthy **$18,058.03**. As such, AAAL was in a position to offer more financial support to members attending the AGM by way of three $400 PD awards, and $200 for AAAL Executive and Committee members to offset travel expenses.

Respectfully submitted,
Yvonne Phillips
AAAL Treasurer

Statistics and Assessment Committee Report

Membership Changes

We did not welcome any new members this year. Jenn Laskosky's time on the committee is wrapping up and we would like to thank her for all of her assistance and wish her the best.

Annual Survey

The committee received 21 responses, which is one more than last year, and aligns with our yearly average. No updates were made to the questionnaire this year.

Reports will be made available on the AAAL website.

The visualizations for the collected data are available on the AAAL Tableau Statistics Dashboard. There are two visualizations to view:

- *AAAL Institutional Fact Sheet 2016-2025 - filterable by institution*
- *AAAL All Statistics 2024/25 - filterable by measure*

All data will be accessible on the AAAL Dataverse page. Data can also be downloaded directly from the Tableau data reports.

If there is something that you would like us to consider adding to the questionnaire, or a definition that you think needs clarification, you can reach out to us at aaal.assess@gmail.com.

Request for Examples of AAAL Statistics in Action

In order to better communicate the value proposition of the yearly AAAL statistics, we are looking to the AAAL community for examples of how you (or your institution) have used our statistics to advocate for change within your organization. Please send any examples you have to aaal.assess@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Cohen, Mount Royal University
Emily Villanueva, University of Lethbridge
Jenn Laskosky, Concordia University

Communications Committee Report

AAAL communications are shared on the AAAL Website, Bluesky (Alberta Association of Academic Libraries), Facebook (Alberta Association of Academic Libraries), the AAAL Newsletter (subscribe here), and the Jerome-L listserv (subscribe here).

- The Communications Committee has consolidated the AAAL membership contact list into a single, centralized location. Please let us know if there are any changes to your preferred contacts!
- The Communications Committee is currently conducting an audit of the AAAL website. Minor changes to the content and layout can be expected in the next few months.

If you have any communications you would like to share via AAAL, please contact aaal.communications@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Caitlin Ratcliffe (NorQuest College), Social Media Manager
Tessa Brodhead (The King's University), Webmaster Administrator
Meghan Staal (University of Alberta), Blog Administrator

Learning and Development Report

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Fall 2025 virtual meeting. Planning for this meeting began in August 2025 and incorporated member feedback from our Fall 2024 meeting. The committee investigated the possibility of featuring a keynote speaker for this meeting. Unfortunately, we were unable to book a speaker for this meeting despite casting a wide net. The committee decided to return to the facilitated discussion room format from our Fall 2023 meeting, which centred on current topics and issues in libraries. The committee searched for articles of interest to the membership for discussions, and each breakout room was led by a committee member. These sessions were successful, with feedback quite positive and including excellent suggestions for future sessions. For example, offering the option to move between discussion rooms would allow members to engage with more topics, and having facilitators share guiding questions as well as articles could support participants, which we will consider for future online meetings. Attendance numbers and post-meeting surveys indicate that members remain satisfied with the Fall/Spring meeting formats overall. For example, we have had consistent attendance at both our Fall and Spring meetings, and in our last survey, all respondents indicated that the meetings met or exceeded their expectations. As always, we welcome and appreciate feedback and suggestions regarding our programming!

The Spring AGM and professional development planning began in December 2025, so the committee could review feedback and start planning this important event for the membership, including finding a host institution. The University of Lethbridge Library generously offered to host the Spring 2026 AGM. Committee member and ULethbridge librarian Emma Scott has taken the lead in coordinating logistics for this event, including securing a keynote speaker. A call for professional development programming proposals was sent to the membership in March, and we are grateful to all who submitted proposals. Proposals were then reviewed by the committee using our presentation rubric. We believe that the variety of topics and the quality of the content to be presented at the Spring Meeting will be of interest to the membership. With support from the Executive, the committee has continued to plan for an informative day of professional development and to schedule opportunities to connect with colleagues during catered coffee breaks and lunch.

The Committee was also pleased to collaborate with the AAAL Chair-Elect, Celine-Gareau Brennan, to adjudicate and award three AAAL Professional Development Awards to support members in attending the Spring 2026 AGM. Our Chair-Elect coordinated the call for awards applications, shared the applications with the committee, and supported the L&D committee in selecting the award recipients. The Committee is grateful to be able to support member engagement in this capacity.

Once we wrap up our 2026 AGM, the committee will begin planning our Fall 2026 meeting. The committee will collect and review feedback from the Spring AGM, then consider how this new information will guide future planning and events. Stay tuned, and please reach out with suggestions for programming! Thinking further ahead, we ask that our voting members consider hosting the Spring 2027 AGM! For questions about hosting, please reach out to aaal.learningdevelopment@gmail.com or aaal.executive@gmail.com. We can answer questions you might have and share the planning documents with you.

Many thanks for attending today's meeting. Please reach out if you have any questions, suggestions for programming, or are interested in contributing to the Learning & Development Committee!

Respectfully Submitted,

The AAAL Learning & Development Committee: Ali Foster (MacEwan University, Committee Chair); Christena McKillop (University of Calgary); Dana Ouellette (University of Alberta); Emma Scott (University of Lethbridge); Rynnelle Wiebe (Medicine Hat College)

Mentorship Committee Report

The Mentorship Committee welcomed thirteen mentor/mentee pairs this past year, a new record. Results from the January midterm survey indicated generally positive results among ten respondents, with 50% reporting high satisfaction and highlighting mentors as relatable and supportive. However, a few responses also mentioned challenges—including inconsistent communication, contact difficulties, and differing experience levels (especially between librarians and library technicians). Some indicated a more structured mentorship process would be beneficial, as well as increased access to resources. We will be looking closely at these

comments and will strive to make corrections and improvements. The certificates of participation will be emailed to all mentors and mentees in May. A call for new participants for the 2026/27 year will follow in the summer.

Current committee members include Sarah Chomyc from the University of Alberta, Holly Hoffmann from St. Mary's University, Shaun McMullen from Portage College, and Ron Rooth and Roxy Garstad from MacEwan University.