

The Voice

A Bug in Your Ear . . .

by Tammy Moore



Happy New Year, everyone! I hope each and every one of you had a fantastic holiday season.

Now that the pleasantries are out of the way, I want to request some help from you all. The Voice is YOUR chance to speak, share, inspire and rile your peers locally, nationally, and internationally, and very few are taking advantage of this opportunity. We have nearly thirty thousand students, and often I am hard-pressed to get one or two articles submitted within a week. You are all bright, talented, educated human beings. You all have thoughts, feelings, opinions, experience and education from a unique standpoint. This is distance education, so you all have strong correspondence abilities. Why aren't we pooling all this information and sharing it with each other? Why aren't we posing opinions and questions to each other, discussing issues that may ruffle a few tail-feathers but allow each other to grow and learn outside of our individual reality tunnels? Why are we passive and lazy, and using the same old excuse of well, ...it's distance education, so I don't have to get involved. Wake up, everyone! You've worked hard to get where you are, and to gain the recognition of distance education as being a valid education, one that is at least equal to campus universities. If you didn't believe in that, you wouldn't be an AU student. So, share your voice, experience, opinions, and knowledge with us.

This is a plea with the students of AU to use The Voice as YOUR voice. If even a third of you respond to this, we should be able to have an excellent forum of discussion and share news that allows YOUR paper to be interesting and exciting. C'mon people, get involved. Don't be passive, brain-dead citizens of a stereotypical culture! Stand up! Write me an article. If I've made you mad, GOOD! Write a letter to the editor explaining why you don't have time for this 'educational involvement' crap. If I've pushed the button to getting any kind of response out of you :

Deadlines are every Tuesday, we pay \$10 for articles 250-400 words. As an incentive bribe, we are now offering \$15 per article to writers who can provide 10 articles, ten weeks in succession (linked or not). No fiction, please.



Plugging the Drain

by b.e. hydromako



Here in Canada we find that the cost of our education is steadily on the rise. The government is largely ineffectual in limiting the heights of soaring tuition; as well, they are unable to provide an efficient cost sharing method which benefits those in need. Therefore, more of us are required to dig even deeper chasms of debt in which we find ourselves buried after we receive our degrees. Is it any wonder then, that many well educated people decide to abandon our country for the greener pastures of the USA? Our university educated citizens are leaving Canada for better opportunities south of the border.

And who can blame them? If we are intelligent people, then we seek to exploit the most profitable avenues which present themselves to us—this is how we are taught to live. Thus, it only makes sense that people whose skills cost them tens of thousands of dollars to develop will go where the money is available for them to repay their debts in a quick and efficient manner; and so, we have the problem known as, "the brain drain." This is a problem which our government and Canadian companies are desperately seeking to resolve.

A possible solution to this problem presents itself immediately to us: reduce the price of tuition, and make the brunt of the cost of education fall on our country. If we are able to acquire a university education which has been paid for by Canada, then there is no pressing monetary debt, but only a moral debt to the country which has supported us thus far. Our graduates might feel an obligation to stay within the country which so lovingly funded their post-secondary education. Moreover, in order to stop unscrupulous individuals from taking advantage of such a benevolent system, we could have separate programs for our students. We could require that those partaking of this subsidized education sign a contract with Canada which would require that they stay inside our borders for a certain number of years once they are out of school and in the work force. Those who wish to exploit the job market of foreign countries would still be able to pay for their own schooling by the current system of student loans.

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On the Flip Side....

After Hamelin Review
Get your 2001 Handbook
Enlightening Information

Master of Arts, Integrated Studies

By Karen Mizeri

For the year 2001 Athabasca University is embarking on a brand new program: The Master Arts, Integrated Studies. This program may be of interest to a variety of students, as it allows integration of disciplinary approaches across the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The courses are going to be offered as paced, home study, or via the internet; allowing for greater flexibility for students.

The director of the program is long time faculty member Dr. Mike Gismondi. It requires the completion of 33 credits (eleven courses), eighteen of these must be completed through Athabasca University.

After completing two core courses, a number of options are open to students. Students could consider one of the university-developed programs: Cultural Studies, Community Development, Global Change, Information Studies, Feminist Thought, Canadian Studies, Historical Studies, and Work, Organizations, and Leadership are all under consideration. The option of developing your own program is also there - simply complete one integrated project and eight MAIS electives.

If you are interested in this program, please contact the program administrator, Rebecca Heartt at (780) 675-6792 or email her at rebeccah@athabascau.ca. You can also contact Dr. Mike Gismondi, director, Integrated studies at (780) 675-6218 or email mikeg@athabascau.ca

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER COMMENT FOR THE VOICE

Paced Classes: A Thing of the Past?

By Darren L. Kereluk

Vice President-Student Academics,
Athabasca University Students' Union



Recent rumours have come out stating that some people at Athabasca University wish to see the elimination of paced courses at the Learning Centres. Supposedly, they even have surveys that back their claims, but I would really rather hear from the students that might be affected by such a change.

I can understand the desire for AU to want to reduce costs, but must this be done at the expense of service to students. It seems to me that people who are working in downtown Calgary and Edmonton make great use of the paced courses. Trust me, it is not easy doing ACCT 253 from a place that's 900km away from my tutor, so I can understand the great value that students get from having direct contact with an instructor in a classroom (especially for the dreaded ACCT and TAXX courses!). Then too, when you consider the logistics involved with working downtown, and being close to a Learning Centre, eliminating paced classes makes absolutely no sense. If AU needs to control expenses, I have ideas for other areas that they can look at, rather than reducing this valuable service to students.

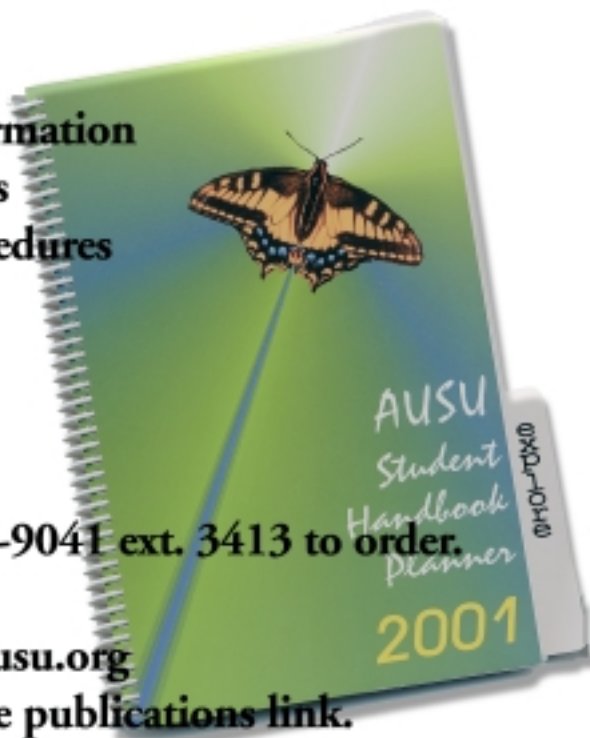
I would like to ask all of you to give me your views one way or another so that I can deal with this issue on your behalf with AU. If there were a group of you that have the same thoughts, and even want to present a petition, I would welcome that too.

I am always happy to listen to students' academic concerns and to help them in any way possible to reach great achievements in their studies. I can be reached at:

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Fill on our online application at www.ausu.org or contact Tammy Moore at 1-800-788-9041 ext 2905 on Fridays between 8:30 and 4:30 MST. You can also email voice@ausu.org.

After Hamelin by Bill Richardson

review by Desiree Petersen



“After Hamelin” is one of my favorite kinds of fairy tales — it reveals the untold story and gives us a powerful female character. Almost every fairytale leaves us questions such as “what happens

next” or “how did that”. In rich, glowing detail, Richardson gives us this. He tells us the story of Penelope; the child left behind when the cheated Piper returns to Hamelin and extracts payment in the form of the town’s children. As with many tales, all is not as we would be lead to believe.

The children did not caper off into a land of rainbows to live happily ever after. I suspect that part was made up to ease the minds of parents of missing children. After all, fairy tales are meant to cheer. No, the Piper is not a nice man. He leads the children off to live a life of ratty slavery.

It is Penelope, who on her eleventh day, both loses her hearing and learns of her gift of Deep Dreaming. She must cross over to the world of Deep Dreaming and rescue the children. She is brave and spirited and has fantastical adventures along the way where she is truly tested.

The most interesting thing about this story is that is told by Penelope when she is 101 years old. No one remembers who she is or what she has done for Hamelin. She knows her time is near ending, and fortune has brought her another Penelope — younger, gifted, and reaching her eleventh — to pass along the story and accompanying legacy.

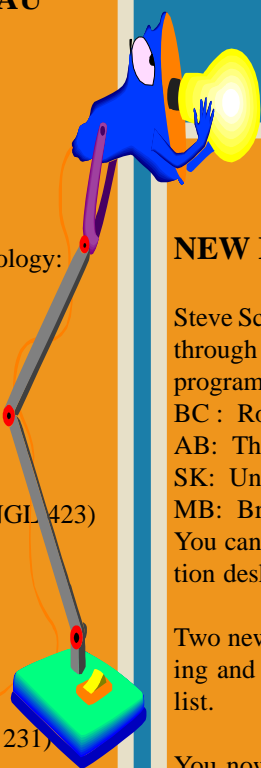
Bill Richardson has turned his gift for whimsy to the crafting of a marvelous tale. This is not just for adults who always wanted to know the rest of the story. This is also for children who are ready for a taste of true adventure.

AU ONLINE STATS ARE IN

Not including project courses, there are 500 undergraduate and graduate courses in the 2000-2001 calendar. Three hundred of these courses have basic online syllabus and e-mail communications, including assignments, or around 60%. Seventy, or 14% are online enhanced in some way, and 26%, or 130 courses are available completely online.

NEW AND UPDATED COURSES AT AU

Advanced Financial Accounting (ACCT 451)
Principles of Auditing (ACCT 460)
Writing In Organizations (ADMN 233)
Introductory Microbiology (BIOL 325)
Communications in History (CMNS 302)
Film and Genre (CMNS 425)
Applications Development with Emerging Technology:
Multimedia with Java (COMP 490)
Advanced Operating Systems (COMP 315)
Victims of Crime (CRJS 352)
Computers in Education (EDPY 274)
Educational Issues and Social Change II
Current Debates (EDUC 302)
Film and Literature (ENGL 373)
Contemporary Literary Theory and Criticism (ENGL 423)
Overview of Corporate Finance (FNCE 370)
First Year University French I (FREN 200)
First Year University French II (FREN 201)
Imperial Russia (HIST 327)
Twentieth Century United States (HIST 380)
Introduction to Calculus II (MATH 266)
Introduction to Philosophy: East and West (PHIL 231)
Psychology and Mass Media (PSYC 315)
Feminist Approaches to Counselling (WMST 310)



Enlightening Information

NEW FROM AU LIBRARY

Steve Schafer of Library Services has arranged for new borrowing privileges for AU undergraduates, through the COPPUL (The Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries) reciprocal loan program. There are new sites now available in all the Western provinces.

BC : Royal Roads University, SFU, Trinity Western U, UBC, UNBC, UVic

AB: The King’s University College, U of A, U of C, U of L

SK: University of Regina, University of Saskatchewan

MB: Brandon University, University of Manitoba, University of Winnipeg

You can receive your COPPAL undergrad card, by request only, through the AU Library Information desk at (780) 675-6254 or library@athabascau.ca

Two new databases are accessible to students through the Au Library web page; Proquest Computing and Proquest Communications, adding more than 200 titles to the AU Library Journal Titles list.

You now have the option to use Encyclopedia Britannica Online in your online AUCAT search! After your initial search, the button appears on the results page to do another search through EBO.

The Voice

The Voice is the newspaper of the Athabasca University Students’ Union. Ideas, suggestions, and submissions are welcomed. The Editor retains the right to edit any submissions for length and content. The views expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of the Athabasca University Students’ Union.

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